Children's Meaning Making In Classroom Role-Play At 4-5 Years: A Systemic Functional Linguistic Investigation

Thesis

Children's meaning-making in classroom role-play at 4-5 years: a systemic functional linguistic investigation

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously submitted to the Open University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

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Abstract

This thesis explores meaning-making in children's peer-led classroom role-play and considers its contribution to learning during the first year of school. The aims of the research are to understand, firstly, how children of 4-5 years through their lexicogrammatical choices enact social roles and construe role-play scenarios that are reminiscent of real life, and secondly, what opportunities in these peer-led collaborative dialogues there may be for learning language, learning through language and learning about language.

The methodological and analytical approach draws on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the Vygotskian construct of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). I focus on linguistic and other semiotic data collected from children's interactions in fifteen video-recorded small group classroom role-plays, and ten audio recorded teacher role-play introductions with the whole class.

Classroom role-play is reconceptualised theoretically as a genre (as defined within SFL) enabling a deeper understanding of children's meaning-making in this context. The findings show that the construal of the social scenario is based on the children's dialogic interaction and ability to co-create individual genre stages. Offering insights into these stages, I show evidence of the children's sophisticated and creative linguistic and other semiotic choices.

Through an interactional analytic framework, I consider how the children are able to extend their ZPD in six learning areas that have been linked to longer term social and academic learning. Findings show that the teacher introductions prime the children's learning which is then consolidated further in serendipitous opportunities forged by the particular nature of the child-led extended dialogic interaction of classroom role-play.

My study emphasises and reinforces the value of considering classroom role-play as a unique pedagogic resource for extending children's meaning-making and learning in their first year at school. As a result, the outcomes of this research have implications for future educational practice in this area.

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1.1 General Introduction

In this first chapter I outline the background and rationale for this research into young children's talk and meaning-making in classroom role-play and the opportunities that these role-plays offer 4-5 year-olds for learning language, learning through language and learning about language (Halliday, 1980/ 2003). The role-plays that I focus on involve groups of three 4-5 year old children constructing an imaginary life-like scenario (e.g. cafe, shoe shop). The scenarios are introduced by the teachers and the children role-play within a designated area of their classroom that has been furnished with props. In this chapter, I set out the broad aims and objectives for the research, and I provide an overview of the theories that have been employed and that have shaped the analytical framework of the study. I introduce the guiding research questions and set out the structure for the thesis.

1.2 The contribution of young children's talk and play to their learning, and the interesting case of role-play

The importance of talk or spoken language, in the context of young children's learning is widely acknowledged (Halliday, 1975, Vygotsky, 1978, Snow, 1983, Painter, 1991, Alexander, 2004, Myhill, 2006, Mercer and Littleton, 2007), and research suggests that it underpins short and long term academic and social success (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammonds, Siraj-Blatchford and Taggart 2010; Lillard, Lerner, Hopkins, Dore, Smith and Palmquist 2013). In the educational context in England for children of 4-5 years, the

contribution of spoken language is reflected in the most recently published National Curriculum (Department for Education, 2013a) where it occupies a central position, signalling an official high level engagement with the theoretical and empirical work supporting these claims.

> The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. (Department for Education, 2013a:13)

An emphasis on spoken language is also reflected in the Early Years Foundation Stage in England (Department for Education, 2014). This is the curriculum for young children from birth to five years old. A child in the final year of this curriculum will be aged 4-5 years and in their first year of school in what is typically termed the Reception Class. The Reception Class forms an interesting educational bridge; children still have opportunities to learn through play, and yet they are also beginning their formal literacy and numeracy programmes as they are prepared for the more demanding academic curriculum of Year 1 (and Key Stage 1).

Talk[1] in the context of play is also recognised to facilitate children's learning in early childhood (for example:Vygotsky, 1978, Bretherton, 1984, Corsaro, 1985, Sawyer, 1997, Bergen, 2002, Wood, 2010, Lillard et al., 2013). On the basis of the evidence that talk in play supports learning, it is clear why play is encouraged within the Early Years curriculum

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[1] Different terms for spoken language are used in the literature; the terms talk, speech and language are used interchangeably. In this thesis I use the term *talk* as it suggests for me a more dialogic notion which is an important aspect of this work.

(Department for Education, 2014). One way in which talk in play is facilitated in the Reception Class is in role-play. Role-play provides an interesting site for research in the classroom as it can be primed by the teachers. I use the term priming to describe how the teachers support the children's role-play interactions. In the school for this research, the priming is through a whole-class introduction to the type of social situation (for example a cafe, or doctor's appointment). These introductions included a teacher-led discussion of a typical encounter (for example placing an order in a cafe), an explanation of key vocabulary, an introduction to items found (props such as a play doctor's kit, or a cafe menu), language modelling, and a discussion of the children's own experiences in these types of social situations. However, the resulting role-play after the teacher priming is a spontaneous language interaction between the children as a result of its unscripted and largely unplanned nature.

The small amount of research into young children's classroom role-play is divided between empirical work with a language focus, and classroom-based practitioner-focused research on the more general functions of role-play with less specific attention on language. The language-focused research on role-play often relies on single scenarios to make statements about children's use of appropriate technical vocabulary such as medical terms (Sachs, Goldman, Chaillé 1985), the use of appropriate language 'styles' for specific scenarios (Hoyle, 1998, Gordon, 2002, Kyratzis, 2004) and the use of play props (Sachs et al., 1985, Gillen and Hall, 2001). While this work accounts in part for children's language choices in role-play and provides a useful starting point for the study reported in this thesis, there remain a number of interesting areas which previous research has not as yet addressed in any detail. First, existing research does not provide extensive information about the precise lexicogrammatical choices that children make in classroom role-play and the impact that these choices have on the creation of the role-play. Second, researchers have not looked in detail at the dialogic nature of classroom role-play nor at how role-play interactions unfold dynamically. I shall argue that these are

key to the unfolding of the scenario. Finally, the implications of the combination of language and other semiotic resources (for example, props) for children's meaning-making have not been considered.

The benefits of role-play in the practitioner based research are drawn from primarily classroom observations and teacher interviews (for example: Rogers and Evans, 2008, Brooker, 2010, Smidt, 2011, Wood, 2014). While this research strongly underlines the value of role-play, none of the work has established firm links between children's meaning-making in role-play and the skills that contribute particularly to a child's long term academic success. Furthermore, the practitioner-based research suggests a dichotomy between the play focus of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum and its implementation in practice. While it is widely agreed that play is of value, it comes under pressure from other more formal aspects of teaching and learning in the Early Years Reception Class. I suggest that the dichotomy might be attributed to the little that is really understood about how exactly role-play might contribute to children's learning. In relation to this final point, Rogers and Evans (2008:118) point out that 'greater recognition of the complexity of role-play for this age group is needed to avoid narrow interpretations of its context and contribution to learning in the foundation stage'.

One reason for the lack of detailed linguistic knowledge resulting from practitioner studies is the gap between traditions of research on 4-5 year-olds' language and learning that draw on linguistics, and those which draw on other disciplines, for instance education, but do not analyse children's language in detail. A result of this gap is that researchers have not been able to address, in depth, the interwoven relationship between play, language and learning (Brooker, 2010). Gardner and Yaacob (2008:301) point out that 'most studies on the benefits of role-play in early childhood education pay little attention to dialogue, or the actual language, and how this is used in context'. Gardner and Yaacob's observation, together with other calls to continue work to further the debate on the

relationships between language, play and learning (for example Holmes and Romeo, 2012) provide a strong empirical justification for this in-depth doctoral research into children's meaning-making in classroom role-play and the opportunities that this activity presents for their learning.

My personal interest in this area of research stems from a study of children's language I undertook for a Masters-level Applied Linguistics course. I recorded 4-5 year-old children's talk in various classroom contexts. During my analysis of their language use in a role-play, I was immediately struck by the ability of a child who suddenly 'became' a vet and initiated a short role-play with his peers. This rapid and apparently effective shift made me question how the social encounter had been accomplished linguistically, without overt planning or agreement between the children. I was particularly interested in how the children's language, at quite a precise lexicogrammatical level, reflected their position as a child in a classroom in one utterance, while in the next they were quite clearly mimicking an adult role and thereby construing a completely different social context.

1.3 Research aims and objectives

The aims of this research are to provide new insights into young children's use of language and other semiotic resources in classroom role-play, and into the contribution of classroom role-play to children's learning. The first aim is to contribute to the field of applied linguistics in furthering our understanding of how young children manipulate their linguistic repertoires to create complex and precise meanings enabling them to create an unfolding scenario in 'life-like' classroom role-plays. By life-like I mean role-plays that are reminiscent of day to day typical social scenarios such as a doctor's appointment or a sales encounter in contrast to, for instance, a dinosaur land or a teddy bears' picnic. I will discuss research that was conducted on similar adult scenarios (outside role-play) and

refer to this research as 'real life' (discussed in detail in Section 4.4.2). I do not wish to suggest that children's classroom role-play is not real life; I use the term simply as a contrast to the role-play imaginary world where life-like roles and scenarios have been created by children in play.

Based on the widely accepted assumption that children's talk in classroom role-play is of importance in some way to learning (discussed in detail in Chapter 2), the second aim of the research is to contribute to the literature in Early Years education and articulate, from a linguistic perspective, the value of role-play for children in terms of learning language, learning through language and learning about language (Halliday, 1980/ 2003).

To achieve these aims, I carried out two types of recordings. First, I video-recorded groups of three 4-5 year old fluent English-speaking children in their Reception Class in a first school in England engaged in role-play. The role-plays were themed broadly within five life-like social scenarios (baby clinic, cafe, pet shop, vet's, shoe shop). Second, I audio-recorded the teacher introductions for each of these social scenarios. Subsequently I studied these recordings and analysed the children's peer language and other semiotic data in 15 role-plays, and the teacher-class language interaction in 10 introductions, to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?

a) How are role-plays organised?

b) How do lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices influence role-play?

RQ2: What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

1.4 *Theoretical framing*

In order to address the gaps in existing research on children's role-play and to answer the research questions, it was necessary to engage with existing theories of learning and language, and develop a theoretical framework that would facilitate the illumination of children's linguistic choices in the context of a classroom environment. This research draws on Vygotsky's (1978) theoretical contribution through his work on early childhood development, and his seminal exposition of links between play and learning within a social theory of cognitive development. As a psychologist, however, Vygotsky's work does not address the linguistic processes in which I am particularly interested. While existing linguistic research has identified specific features of children's language use in role-play, I wanted to draw on a complementary linguistic model which would enable me to capture how the children construed a social scenario through their language choices. The theoretical and analytical framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) was chosen as the linguistic approach to underpin this research. Initiated by Halliday (1973, 1975), SFL offers an approach to language that continues to be taken up, discussed and debated (see among others Bowcher, 2007, 2014, Martin and Rose, 2008, Fontaine, Bartlett and O'Grady 2013, Coffin and Donohue, 2014, Hasan, 2014, Martin, 2014, Berry, 2015).

SFL posits a theoretical and analytical approach to language as a system of meaning based on language choices related to the context. In addition, SFL offers specific analytic strategies which can be useful for scrutinising how children shift, sometimes very rapidly, in and out of role-play. Furthermore, SFL analysis allows the children's linguistic choices to be explored at clause level and at a level 'beyond the clause' (Martin and Rose, 2007) as an unfolding dialogue, through genre theory.

Within SFL, the concept of genre, defined as a 'staged, goal-directed social process', (Martin and Rose, 2007:6) is a theoretical construct which can be used to understand the

nature of children's meaning-making in the context of unfolding role-play scenarios. Genre permits the illumination of the dialogic and contextual nature of the language realised dynamically through children's lexicogrammatical choices. In addition to these lexicogrammatical choices, children can also construct meaning in role-play through drawing on other kinds of semiotic resources, alongside language. The semiotic study of multimodality is a growing field of interest and draws significantly on SFL (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001, Flewitt, 2013). Within this field, meaning is seen as construed multi-modally or via different semiotic systems, involving language as one mode or system among many. There is continuing interest in how different semiotic resources work together to create meaning, and how this can be conceptualized theoretically (for example: O'Halloran, 2004b, Bowcher, 2007). In this work I will focus specifically on the children's use of the realistic props provided in the role-play area and consider how the props, together with language, create meaning.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Supported by my findings drawn from the analysis of the children's choice of language and semiotic resources, I will put forward two key arguments. First, I will argue that 4-5 year-old children in classroom role-play co-construct the social scenario of the role-play by moving through a series of stages, some of which are reminiscent of a real life social encounter and some of which assist in the production of the scenario. These stages are realised through lexico-grammatical choices that directly affect the construal of a scenario and the creation of make-believe social roles. Second, I will argue that children learn language, learn through language and learn about language in classroom role-play across two connected sites – the teacher introductions and the role-plays – where the first primes identifiable areas of learning in a typical teacher-whole class interaction, and the latter

provides serendipitous opportunities for learning through extended dialogue in peer-led groups.

In this introduction, I have set out my research interest, the study aims, and established the research questions around which the study is organised. In Chapter 2, I select and critically review relevant empirical literature from the fields of children's talk, play and learning to contextualise my own work and indicate its contribution to the field. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework combining Vygotskian and Hallidayan constructs that underpin this study. I outline, in Chapter 4, my methodological and analytical approach and detail the data collection, including the ethical considerations of the research. Chapters 5 and 6 present the findings and discussion in relation to RQ1:

> How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?
>
> a) How are role-plays organised?
>
> b) How do lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices influence role-plays?

In Chapter 7, I present the findings and discussion in relation to RQ2:

> What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

In Chapter 8 I conclude the study and discuss the implications and relevance of the work, both for the theoretical understanding of the relationships between young children's language, play and learning, and for practitioners working in Early Years education.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The focus of the research outlined in this thesis is children's meaning-making in classroom role-play and the contribution that this activity can make to children's learning, as set out in the research questions (Chapter 1). The research questions are framed within an educational policy context that acknowledges firstly, early childhood education to be of vital importance to a child's long and short term academic success (Sylva et al., 2010), and secondly, that there exists a link between children's interaction in classroom role-play and their potential for learning (see for example: Bodrova, 2008, Gardner and Yaacob, 2008). When children engage in classroom role-play they will (typically) interact using language in a pair or a small group. Consequently, research into children's classroom role-play is at the intersection of three areas of work that govern the core of this study: children's spoken language (or talk), play and learning, shown in Figure 1.

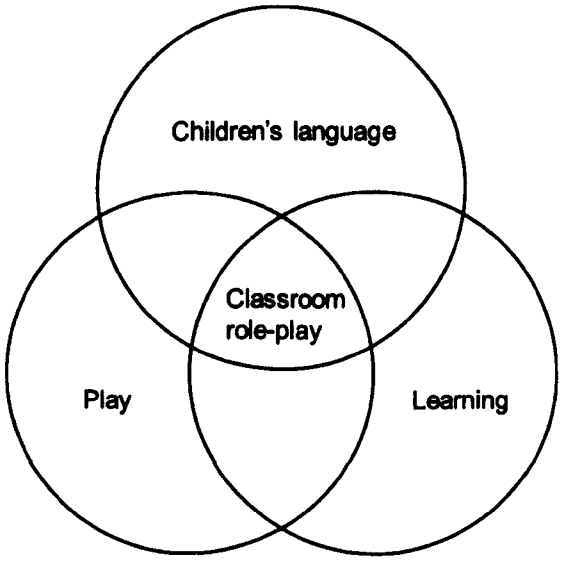

Figure 1 Classroom role-play at the intersection of three areas of research

The aim of this literature review is twofold: first to discuss the findings from selected empirical research on children's talk, play and learning in order to establish the foundation

for the research questions, and second, to introduce the theories of Vygotsky and Halliday which are of key importance to my research. I begin by discussing the complexity of the notion of play and the use of the term role-play in this study. In 2.3, I outline relevant linguistic features of children's talk in peer play from the field of linguistics, and in 2.4, I explore the relationship between talk, play and learning. In 2.5, I discuss the place of talk, play and learning as captured within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum and educational research that examines the provision of classroom role-play in the context of curricula.

2.2 Defining role-play

Play has been described as 'inherently ambiguous and unpredictable' (Sutton-Smith, 1997:150) and has proven to be complex to define (for example: Fein, 1981, Garvey, 1990, Sutton-Smith, 1997, Burghardt, 2011, Smidt, 2011, Lillard et al., 2013). Sutton-Smith, in his seminal work on play, characterised it as 'the act of making what is present absent and what is absent present' (Sutton-Smith, 1997:127). He identified characteristics such as: intrinsically motivated; characterized by means rather than ends; freedom from externally imposed rules and children being actively engaged in their activity (Sutton-Smith, 1997:188). While complex, the notion of play, and its characteristics, remain of interest within research (see for example: Broadhead, Howard and Wood 2010, Smidt, 2011, Wood, 2014).

From the many types of play, this research takes classroom role-play as the specific focus. Role-play is referred to by various terms in the literature, for instance, Fein's comprehensive review of the literature of 'pretend play' in the 1970s suggests the terms role enactment and sociodramatic play. Sociodramatic play is also the preferred term for Smilansky and Shefatya (1990) and Sachs and her collaborators (Sachs and Devine,

1976, Sachs et al., 1985). Engel (2005) however chooses narrative play for play that mirrors real life, and pretend play to describe that which enacts a fantasy world. The term pretend play is used in work by Sawyer (1997, 2011) and Japiassu (2008). Marjanovič-Umek and Lešnik-Musek (2001) prefer the terms role enactment and symbolic play. In preference to these terms, the potentially more accessible term 'role-play' is used in this thesis as it combines and maintains a focus on the notion of play with the children enacting a role, both ideas central to this research. Role-play is the term used in Corsaro's (1985) seminal work on play, and the policy documents for the Early Years National Curriculum that supports the classroom context. Furthermore, it is the term used by the teachers involved in this PhD study. I align my own conceptualisation of role-play with Fein as a:

> ... social activity in the sense that children in the play group relate to one another in accord with roles compatible with a dramatic theme (Fein, 1981:1101)

The level to which the children engage in role-play is acknowledged in the literature as difficult to establish. To address this problem, Smilansky and Shefatya (1990) developed what is known as the 'Smilansky Scale for Evaluation of Dramatic and Sociodramatic Play'. The scale provides a way in which the activity of role-play can be assessed based on five characteristics that describe the children's engagement, including: engagement with make-believe roles, props, verbal language, two or more players, and lasting for a period of time (Smilansky and Shefatya, 1990:238-239). While this scale has not been used formally to define or analyse the role-play data, the characteristics that Smilansky and Shefatya suggest do align broadly with the characteristics of the role-plays selected for analysis. For example, the participants in my study engage in small group role-play, and use language and props to create make-believe roles and social scenarios over a period of 10–20 minutes.

Young children of 4-5 years (the age of the participants in this study) are defined by a number of different educational terms in the literature. For example, Sachs et al. (1985), Blum-Kulka, Huck-Taglich and Avni (2004), Kyratzis (2007), and Hoyte, Torr and Degotardi (2014) all describe children aged between 2-5 years as 'pre-schoolers'. Typically, in the UK a 'pre-schooler' would be aged between 2-4 years and engaged in preschool education in a preschool or nursery rather than in their first year in school. As a result, work by researchers, that might first appear to discuss younger children than the participants in this study, may include children of the same age. I also draw on work with children of different ages to my child participants, where relevant.

2.3 Children's peer talk in role-play

Children's peer talk as a research area within linguistics was significantly promoted by Garvey's (1977) work on talk in peer play in general (Blum-Kulka and Snow, 2004). Drawing on research from the volume *Child Discourse* (Ervin-Tripp and Mitchell-Kernan, 1977) in which Garvey's work appears, and more recent empirical work, there are three features of children's talk in peer play that are particularly significant in the context of role-play for this doctoral research: i) register, ii) props, iii) regulating the play. After discussing these three points, I will explore the notion of genre through empirical work on children's oral genres (I discuss the specific orientation to register and genre taken in this thesis in Chapter 3).

2.3.1 Linguistic features of children's role-play

One of the most striking things in observing a group of children role-playing is that, in some way, a role-play can be reminiscent of a similar life-like social encounter. As set out in RQ1, one of the aims of the thesis is to understand how children achieve this. As much

of role-play interaction is enabled (typically) through language, the children's language choices must clearly be a starting point to explore how these choices instantiate the role-play scenario. Children's ability to make lexicogrammatical choices that align with expected features of a particular register is highlighted in the literature on role-play.

Register is explored in research on children of 4-5 years by Kyratzis (2007). Kyratzis' young participants were engaged in playing a 'news-announcer', and she found that they made language choices that might be expected in a news-announcer register (as identified by comparison to 'sports-announcer' talk identified by Ferguson, 1983, and cited in Kyratzis, 2007:238). The finding that children make registerial choices is supported in work by Marjanovič-Umek and Lešnik-Musek (2001) with children of 4-5 years (which I discuss later in this section) and work with 9 year old children by Blum-Kulka et al. (2004). Blum-Kulka et al. found that the children 'use a style of speech very different from their casual conversational style, including formal lexicogrammatical choices and 'shop talk phrases' (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004:316). The observation that children's language differed between their conversational language and their play language is highly relevant. An earlier study with slightly older children explored boys aged 9-10 years role-playing a sports-caster (Hoyle, 1998). Hoyle found that the children used appropriate constructions for the role of sports-caster described as 'register-marking constructions' (Hoyle, 1998:51), for example, syntactic reduction and simplified constructions. Hoyle links these language choices with the function of the sports-caster role by highlighting that 'the [child] announcers use the simple present to give the impression that their announcement of an action is simultaneous with the action itself' (Hoyle, 1998:51). Although they are presented in varying degrees of detail, the findings from these studies are highly significant in that they show that children from 4 years onwards make linguistic choices based on their perception of the nature of the social encounter that they are playing.

That children use certain terms and stretches of language that are reminiscent of particular social encounters may not be surprising, but participating in role-play also demands that the children must alter their language in relation to other roles in the play. The children's choice of register is thus dialogic, in other words, both imaginatively responsive, and addressive (Bakhtin, 1981). For instance, Hoyle points out that the children must use 'the sorts of linguistic forms and the speech actions typical of the role [and]...must attend to any co-participants' (Hoyle, 1998:47). Hoyle's claim is highly relevant as the role-plays in my study, as I will argue, are collaboratively constructed dialogic texts.

Attention to 'co-participants' is highlighted in the study of young children's talk by Sachs and Devin (1976). They recorded young children talking to different listeners including role-playing a mother talking to her baby (a doll), and they found differences in the way in which the children spoke to their addressees. For example, more imperatives were used when speaking to the baby than their (play) mother or when speaking to their peers. Sachs and Devin's findings are underlined in Corsaro's (1997, 1985) work on play. Corsaro analysed the role-play language of preschool-aged children playing house and investigated how the different imaginary characters spoke to each other (mother to baby and husband to wife). He found that children playing mothers produced more utterances than children playing babies, and that mothers were also more likely to use imperatives. Grammatical variations in the utterances and responses point to the children's understanding of typical social roles and status, and the linguistic forms associated with these. Corsaro notes, 'the children have clear conceptions of status as power. In all the role-play episodes, there were no violations of status expectations...' (Corsaro, 1985:97). Both studies align with Mitchell-Kernan and Kernan's work (1977) on role-play with children (aged 7-12) and the children's use of directives. It was found that imperatives were used more to persons perceived as lower rank within the role-play.

Attention to the addressee in a role-play interaction was also included in Gordon's (2002) study of mother-child role-play. She suggests that her child participant (2 years, 11 months) playing mother, takes on linguistic choices that emulate a parent's language. Comparable findings are seen in Kyratzis' (2007) study highlighted above, where her child participants altered their speech in accordance with their addressee. Kyratzis highlights in particular how the child who casts herself as the news announcer creates a hierarchy of roles within the play thereby giving herself the authority to regulate the other characters. The children thus created asymmetries of power between their characters in play through their use of elements of a recognisable news announcer register. Furthermore, Kyratzis found that while children actively used features of the expected news announcer register, they also subverted the play through language choices not aligned to the register, thereby not simply reproducing adult cultures but in addition actively creating their own peer culture (Corsaro 1985).

While differing degrees of detail make the studies discussed difficult to compare directly, the work all shows that children demonstrate differences in their linguistic choices based on the scenario and the role being enacted. However, the studies all tend to focus on the presentation of one particular type of scenario or role, highlighting lexicogrammatical features indexical of the register. They do not tend to address the more delicate and subtle choices that may also construe important meanings in context.

2.3.2 Combining meaning-making resources: the use of props

While my research is primarily focused on language, it is important to acknowledge the different semiotic resources that are harnessed in meaning-making other than just language. The combining of meaning-making resources is often referred to by the term multimodality, described as 'approaches to representation which assume that communication and meaning-making are about more than just language' (Flewitt,

2013:296). Modes are defined by Kress (2010:79) as a 'socially and culturally shaped set of resources for meaning-making', and include different modes of expression, for instance, language, gaze and gesture among others. The realistic props, that appeared to be an intrinsic part of the role-play area I video-recorded, emerged as important in the children's multimodal meaning-making. As such, in this study, I focus on the children's use of props as other semiotic resources on which the children draw to create meanings. The props in the data included, for example a doctor's kit, a till, shoes for the shoe shop, dressing up clothes, and were present in all five different scenarios: baby clinic, vet's, cafe, shoe shop and pet shop. I outline the different props for each scenario type in Section 4.2.5. In order to avoid any confusion of terms, in this study I will refer to the non-linguistic ways of meaning-making as other semiotic resources, and the physical items themselves, for example a measuring tape, as props. The term mode will be used specifically as the register variable as defined within SFL (see Appendix I and Section 3.4.2 for a discussion of mode in this context).

Long before the emerging contemporary field of multimodal studies, the use of props was highlighted in Vygotsky's seminal work on play. It is worth noting that play in Vygotsky's work should be understood as role-play (Bodrova, 2008). Vygotsky (1978) theorised that children can turn any object into something integral to their play, 'The child sees one thing but acts differently in relation to what he sees' (Vygotsky, 1978:97). Writing in the 1930s Vygotsky would not have had access to the range of 'realistic' props available to contemporary children, although, he does comment on the use of dolls in play. He states that a doll will encourage a recreation of a memory rather than imaginative play. This implies that he placed greater imaginative value on props whose 'meaning' could be determined by the child (i.e. non-realistic props) to create an imaginary situation. However, I will argue, in my own data, that realistic props can also be seen to prompt and encourage highly creative and imaginative scenes and language that may not have otherwise occurred.

Research into children's use of props is included in existing empirical work into children's role-play (for example:Lindqvist, 2001, Marjanovič-Umek and Lewnik-Mušek, 2001, Lofdahl, 2005). There are two points of particular interest for my research: the way in which props assist in the creation of a cultural context, and their facilitation and contribution to children's role enactment in the construal of role-play. Lindqvist suggests that a role-play area that is furnished with props is 'a cultural context [that] encourages children to search for meaningful actions' (Lindqvist 2001:12). I argue that Lindqvist's suggestion implies a greater appreciation is needed of the meanings that props carry in relation to role-play. Gillen and Hall (Gillen, 2000, Gillen and Hall, 2001) found that a toy phone created a new context and stimulated register appropriate uses of language. As a result of this new context, they report that the children's existing conversational skills were extended. Gillen and Hall's work highlights the potential of realistic props as enabling different sociocultural contexts and as motivating new language.

Levy, Wolfgang and Koorland's work employed the Smilansky Scale (Smilansky and Shefatya, 1990 introduced in Section 2.2) together with their own framework that included a focus on number of words, mean length of utterance and scenario specific words and found that 'a functional relationship exists between enriched sociodramatic play and increased language performance'(1992:260). Their findings are supported by Marjanovič-Umek and Lešnik-Musek's (2001) study into symbolic play with three groups of children aged 3-4, 4-5 and 5-6 years, and their use of structured and unstructured play materials. By structured play materials, they mean realistic props as opposed to sticks or cardboard boxes and so on. The work also drew on the Smilansky Scale and found that the children of 4-5 years, when using structured play materials, showed higher forms of symbolic play and 'embryonic' role enactment thus highlighting the relevance of these props to role-play. They suggest that 'there remains a clear connection between the imitative use of the toy and role enactment' (Marjanovič-Umek and Lewnik-Mušek, 2001:56).

Findings from the studies referred to above suggest that realistic props in the classroom role-play area can be understood as carrying some form of meaning which may assist the construal of the scenario as well as the construal of the roles. As Hoyle suggests, 'The status relations they [the children] express in play exist within the peer group but are strengthened with support from the play theme and props' (Hoyle, 1998:80). Not only is the play supported but in addition Roskos' (1991) empirical work using observation and interviews of children of 4-5 years, identifies that props such as pencil and paper, support literacy behaviours in play. Furthermore, she draws attention to the significance of the availability of these items in play, 'What may be of special importance in early literacy experiences is the opportunity to handle literacy items earlier, more often, and in more varied ways then we have traditionally thought' (Roskos, 1991:50). Levy et al's (1992) experimental study into role-play found a more explicit connection between role-play and enhanced language performance. They suggest that the use of realistic props enables 'enriched sociodramatic play' (Levy et al., 1992:254). This work compared impromptu play with role-play that had been selected and primed by the teachers in an area furnished with relevant props as a particular social scenario (e.g. doctors or shop). The work further justifies a focus on props as contributing not only to meaning-making, but to the learning potential of classroom role-play.

2.3.3 Managing and regulating role-play

Anyone who has observed children role-playing, or been part of a role-play with a child, will recognise that language in role-play is not a single uninterrupted dialogue of invented characters' speech and actions. Children manage and regulate role-play at the same time as role-playing. The literature highlights that role-play language is spontaneous, created 'in the moment' and managed in part by the children's prompts outside the voice of the characters. These regulating prompts may take the form of statements such as 'You're

the doctor, I'm the nurse.' (BC-EYC3)[2], and by more subtle and implicit signals from the characters. The more subtle and implicit signals were first observed and discussed by Bateson (1955, [1956] 1971) with animals in play. He coined the term metacommunication to describe the (non-verbal) signals that a specific event is play as opposed to, for example, a fight or argument. The notion of metacommunication has been taken up in the study of children's play, and the use of the term in some work has been extended to include both implicit and explicit signals. For instance, Giffin's (1984) study of children between 3 and 5 years in make-believe play draws on Bateson's notion and she identifies and argues for a continuum of regulating utterances, 'some metacommunication overtly reveals the pretense and other options tend to conceal it.' (Giffin, 1984:79).

Garvey's (1990) discussion of play cites Giffin (1984), and draws further attention to the regulating language 'outside' role-play, establishing a continuing interest in the regulative language that functions alongside the character language in role-play (for example:Göncü, 1985, 1993, Sutton-Smith, 1997, Sawyer, 1997, Martin and Dombey, 2002, Kyratzis, 2007). However, while influential, the studies do not draw attention to the precise language choices of these specific regulating utterances. This doctoral work will explore explicit regulating utterances of the type: 'Pretend you took your dog to the vet's' (PS-EYM2). While the term metacommunication, and related terms (outlined below), are used widely in the literature, I will use the term regulative language. I focus on the language in the role-play that quite explicitly signals the regulation of the imaginary scene, rather than the more implicit signals first suggested by Bateson.

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[2] For every extract drawn from my empirical data supporting this research, an identifying code is provided indexing the scenario type and the group. Further detail is given in Section 4.2.6

Göncü's (1985, 1993) work on social play found that children from 3 to 5 years employed regulating type utterances to: engage in the formation of play groups, transition to pretend mode, and to plan, maintain and terminate play. Göncü makes an important point in relation to these regulative utterances. He acknowledges that they do not occur sequentially, some may coincide, and that the children are able to switch between regulating type utterances and the role-play without disrupting the unfolding role-play. While his findings on the function of the regulating utterances are insightful, he does not explore how the regulating utterances and the actual role-play language work together.

A more fine-grained investigation into the language based on the intended function of the organisational language is Trawick-Smith's research into the spontaneous play of pairs of children aged between 2–5 years (Trawick-Smith, 1998). This work introduced the notion of metaplay as 'the process of suspending actual role-play to think or communicate about pretend themes from outside of the play frame' (Trawick-Smith, 1998:433). Trawick-Smith's term metaplay foregrounds the continuing aspect of play including the children's use of props, and the children's meaningful contribution to the unfolding play. Three main categories were identified: initiations, responses, and constructions. The study suggested that the 5 year olds in the study were particularly active in their metaplay. This research, while appearing to be relatively rarely cited, draws further attention to organisational language relating to play, 'significant symbolic and social interactions – related to pretend play – occur outside of actual role-playing' (Trawick-Smith, 1998:442).

The works of Giffin (1984), Garvey (1990), Göncü (1985, 1993), and Trawick-Smith (1998), discussed above, focused on language that explicitly announces or questions some change in the unfolding play. Sawyer's research, drawing on Bakhtin's (1981) notion of voicing, sought to establish the different 'role voicing' between 'the voices of their everyday selves and the voices of their dramatic pretend roles' (Sawyer, 1996:292). However there are moments where it is clear a child is role-playing through their use of an

utterance that in some way indexes that role. Sawyer's research identified more subtle shifts into role-play to suggest that there exists both implicit and explicit metalanguage preferring the notion of metapragmatic utterances (Sawyer, 1997). An implicit metapragmatic utterance might take the form of: 'What's wrong with your baby?' (BC-EYM1) where the child has started their role-play by adopting a role rather than negotiating or announcing their role explicitly. Sawyer argues that these metafunctional utterances exist because children are both 'actors and directors' (Sawyer 1997:34) in the interaction.

The reason for choosing the director's voice over the actor's is highlighted by Martin and Dombey's work (2002). They draw attention to the potentially restrictive nature of a child's adopted role. They suggest that the children's reliance on regulative utterances at times implies that it may not be possible to regulate the play within the voice of their play role, 'These voices are shaped by wider social practices surrounding the play, with their conventions of what particular roles can and cannot say' (Martin and Dombey, 2002:56). This observation is another signal of the children's quite complex understanding of the language that is appropriate for different social roles.

Gordon's (2002) work with a child (2 years 11 months) enacting a role-play with her mother, highlighted both the regulative utterances and the metacommunicative utterances that manage and maintain the play from within (the play). Gordon finds that the mother and child use a recognizable speech style or register when role-playing highlighting: the use of simple imperatives, pitch of voice and terms of address. While this study provides further insight into the linguistic capabilities of very young children, Gordon does not provide a fine-grained perspective on the lexicogrammatical choices and does not make direct reference to the precise linguistic choices that her child participant makes. However Gordon's work does bring some focus to the relationship between implicit role-play signals enabled through language choices.

The body of the research discussed underlines the importance and value of the complete language interaction within role-play: that is the role-play language and the regulative language that is outside the voice of the characters but impacts the unfolding role-play. A focus on simply the character language would be to omit rich and interesting elements of children's linguistic choices and learning potential. While functional categories of regulative language have been identified, as I have discussed, the particular linguistic choices that construe these categories remain relatively unexplored. As a result little is known about how different linguistic choices affect the unfolding scenario, nor how the two types of language work together

In summary, features of register variation, the use of props and regulative utterances are all highly relevant and foundational to this study and must be acknowledged in order to understand how children construe the social scenario of the role-play. While the notion of dialogue in role-play has been touched on, and will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.4.1, I am interested in bringing the idea of role-play as a co-constructed interaction to the fore, and in how children's classroom role-play might unfold dynamically. I now turn to the construct of genre which allows me to incorporate and build on the features discussed above, and extend a description of classroom role-play to include a dynamic conceptualisation encompassing both 'actor and director' language.

2.3.4 The dynamic unfolding of role-play: the notion of genre

The discussion above outlined key points about register, props and regulative language as three topics which recur in the research literature about children's role-play. This literature tends to describe the language features of role-play synoptically and I wanted to consider children's classroom role-play as a dynamic interaction using the notion of genre. In this section I draw on work on children's talk and genre, while acknowledging that genre

is conceptualised in the literature in different ways. I take genre as a theoretical construct to describe a social interaction within which certain 'stages' are co-constructed by, or between, language users in order to achieve certain expected social goals within a particular social interaction (Martin and Rose, 2007, 2008).

Most research applying the concept of genre to children's talk has focused on the narrative (the telling of a story) often concentrating on talk by a single child. I propose that there are commonalities between oral narratives and spontaneous role-play, and that these studies are therefore relevant in this discussion. For example, the oral narratives are defined by a series of progressive and coherent stages linked in some way with a particular purpose in a broadly similar way to a role-play. I will argue that the feature of progressive stages is characteristic of classroom role-play, for instance, a particular purpose (such as buying shoes, or taking a dog to the vet) can also be broken down into a series of unfolding stages in the context of classroom role-play. I begin with research where children are constructing a genre individually, and while this is not the case in my own data, I argue that this work sets the foundation that children are able to structure an oral text in a series of predictable and recognisable stages.

Research into young children's spontaneous oral genres has been carried out both in and outside the classroom. Children's (5 - 7 years) casual conversations in the car on the way to and from school, were the focus for Preece (1987). From her recordings, she identified 14 narrative genres, and particular stages relating to these genres. A salient point to draw from Preece's work is the application of genre to children's talk, and her claim that children are able to structure their spontaneous talk according to a social purpose. While her findings show that children's spontaneous oral language can be categorised into narrative genre types, Preece does not discuss in detail any differentiating linguistic features between the different narrative types that she identifies, nor does she differentiate stages in the genres (other than in a personal anecdote). However, relevant

to this study, Preece identifies one narrative genre that is collaboratively created, noting that children were 'eager to collaborate' (Preece, 1987:369). The collaboratively created genre that Preece identifies is of significance in my own work, where a small group of children are collaborating in role-play.

Another study (Hicks, 1990) investigated whether children (between 5-7 years) can produce different genres in three different spoken language school tasks in a classroom. Hicks observes that children bring to school a range of, what she terms, narrative discourses including play sessions of the type: 'I'm the Mommy Bear and I'm gonna scare you' (Hicks, 1990:83). Although her reference to children's play is brief, the focus reflects her claim that narrative genre skills are important for 'successful participation in classrooms' (Hicks, 1990:85). Hicks identifies three narrative genres: narration of events, factual news reporting, and storytelling. While she notes only 'subtle differences' in the texts produced by the children in the three genre tasks, she does find differentiating linguistic markers. However, she suggests that the children have only 'nascent ability to apply genre knowledge to school language tasks' (Hicks 1990:83). Hicks' study highlights the value of applying an in-depth linguistic focus to the data in order to draw out ways in which linguistic features differ between genres. The identification of a positive relationship between classroom oral genres and school success is of huge relevance to an exploration of a primarily oral and informal interaction in the classroom.

The notion of genre, its application to children's collaborative peer talk and play, and its relevance to children's learning are highlighted in the empirical work of Blum-Kulka et al. (2004), and in the literature review carried out by Schick and Melzi (2010). Schick and Melzi (2010) do not use the term genre to categorise the oral narratives that they discuss, however they appear to classify oral narratives in the same way as the studies above. They focus in particular on oral narratives of young children between 2-5 years, and a link to literacy development. They suggest that 'children are frequently exposed to more

diverse narrative forms and settings in classroom interactions than in the home' (Schick and Melzi, 2010:301), highlighting further the significance of extended oral discourse within the classroom. Other than Preece's (1987) work, the studies discussed so far are of single children, rather than a group as in the empirical work in my research. However, what is salient is their suggestion that proficiency in oral genres and academic success are linked.

The demands of literacy development and formal education are argued to be positively linked to children's exposure to extended oral genres, such as narratives, explanations and arguments (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004). Blum-Kulka et al. refer to peer talk and pretend play as a 'genre of extended discourse' (2004:308) suggesting that engagement in these particular genres (peer talk and pretend play) is therefore also linked to educational success (cf. Dickinson and Tabors, 2001). They make the point that children's peer talk 'allows for the emergence of these genres in contexts relevant to the children' (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004:324). I argue that classroom role-play is one such context where children might create a genre that bridges real world experiences with a child-relevant context.

The relationship between familiarity in oral genres and academic success is the focus of the quantitative work of Griffin, Hemphill, Camp and Palmer (2004) on children between 5-8 years, with the aim to differentiate between different oral discourses and the relationship to later literacy. While their findings could only suggest that early discourse skills may be linked to later literacy, the study demonstrates the relevance of close attention to language in an investigation of academic success and highlights the complexity in this potential relationship.

The work discussed so far focuses mainly on narratives as oral genres. This exclusive focus has been highlighted as a limitation by Hoyte, Torr and Degotardi (2014) whose

work addressed oral genres in children's play. Hoyte et al. draw on the notion of genre developed in Systemic Functional Linguistics where it is defined as highlighted earlier as a 'staged, goal oriented social process' (Martin and Rose, 2007:6). The work investigated firstly, whether different genres could be identified within three 5 year old boys' conversations in play, and whether the genres identified corresponded with levels of friendship between the children. Friendship was categorised based on a 'friendship circle activity' (Neilsen-Hewett 2002 in Hoyte et al., 2014:24) where the children placed photographs of the children in their class onto a chart with concentric circles. The children were asked to place the photographs according to their 'best friends (the ones they liked to keep close and play with the most of all the time) in the inside circle, 'good friends' (children they liked to play with quite a lot) in the next circle and 'just a little bit friends' (children they only liked to play with a little bit or just sometimes) in the outer circle' (Hoyte et al., 2014:24). The researchers used the outcome of this information to place the children into different dyads of mutually identified high and low friendship statuses. The findings showed that the children instantiated three new genres: making together; sharing personal information and story-telling (Hoyte et al., 2014). Furthermore, the genres were instantiated depending on how the children classed their own friendships (high or low friendship status). Two of the identified genres, the 'storytelling' and the 'sharing personal information genres occurred in the high friendship status dyads, and the 'making together' in the low friendship dyad. The application of the notion of genre to play conversations in this work, clearly resonates with my own research into role-play. What is more, the inclusion of a play conversation, exemplified in data presented by Hoyte et al., shows that their genres, in contrast with the narrative genres of the classroom discussed above, are co-created by their child participants.

The studies selected in this section highlight the children's ability to structure their individual and dialogic talk generically, with a particular purpose. However, the work has not focused in detail at the construction of stages within the individual genres. That new

genres may be identified through the close investigation of children's talk, opens the possibility of considering classroom role-play as a genre in its own right. To my knowledge the concept of genre has not been applied specifically to peer-led classroom role-play that emulates real life social encounters. Genre based approaches are increasingly influential in the teaching of written language (Martin and Rose, 2007, Martin, 2009) and there is potential for a greater understanding of how children instantiate oral classroom genres.

2.3.5 Section Summary

This section has reviewed the research that provides the foundation for addressing RQ1: How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play? I have outlined how numerous research studies have highlighted the significance of register features, the use of props and regulative utterances in children's role-play. The studies of register highlight children's emerging understanding of lexicogrammatical choice and their ability to make linguistic adjustments to approximate the social roles they and their co-participants are playing. These findings are relevant to this study and to RQ1 in particular, and they provide a springboard from which to begin this work into children's meaning-making in classroom role-play. However, there are still significant gaps in research in this area. No work to date has focussed in depth on children's meaning-making through their lexicogrammatical choice and other semiotic resources across a range of different social encounters enacted through classroom role-play. As a result, we know little about the precise ways in which quite young children are able to collaboratively construe pretend social scenarios which imitate different kinds of real life experience. The work on props does not highlight in detail how these resources and language work together to create meaning. Regulative language in role-play was discussed, but how the different functional types of language blend to construe the role-play has not yet been considered. I also suggested the importance of capturing the

dynamic, unfolding nature of the construal of the scenarios, in relation to the analysis of children's language. The discussion of genre in Section 2.3.4 highlighted that this abstract construct has been applied to children's spoken language in class mainly in relation to narratives, and there appears to be an emerging interest in children's talk in play (cf. Hoyte et al., 2014). The research discussed here highlights the value of research into children's spoken genres, and at the same time the paucity of genre based research into children's classroom role-play with genre as conceptualised in SFL terms.

A link between the two research questions and the use of genre in the consideration of peer-led role-play is articulated in the quotation below by Hoyle, who highlights the relationship between register use and the opportunities in role-play for learning.

> ... play itself gives children the incentive to learn, use, and perfect their skills in different registers – to put into practice the notion that propositions can and should be expressed in different ways in different situations (Hoyle, 1998:66)

Hoyle's observation regarding register is highly relevant, as in the conceptualisation of genre by Martin (1992) used in my research, register choice realises genre (discussed in more detail in Section 4.4). I turn now to develop the discussion through a focus on selected literature that addresses learning.

2.4 Talk, play and learning

Role-play is discussed in relation to its learning potential most notably by Vygotsky (1978), who discusses how a child's higher mental functions are developed through role-play. Alongside this theoretical work there is a well-established tradition of research into the relationship between young children's play and learning. Play is seen as foundational in Early Years' education and features in the Early Years Foundation Stage for England for children between birth and 5 years (discussed in more detail in Section 2.5). In this

section I review research into the relationship between young children's talk, play and learning. I begin by examining research focussing on how talk and play contribute to learning, and I then explore work on dialogic interaction in the classroom. The broad focus for this section is thus on how learning is mediated through language, and in particular, on how children's language has been seen to contribute to their academic development and socialisation.

> ...it [role-play] allows the child to appropriate values and social roles from its environment and complex systems of semiotic representation that are widely used by more experienced members of the culture (Japiassu, 2008:328)

2.4.1 The importance of play in learning

The value of play for young children is well documented in seminal work, (for example:Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, Corsaro, 1985, 1997, Garvey, 1990, Sutton-Smith, 1997), and Vygotsky states categorically: 'The influence of play on a child's development is enormous' (1978:96). More recent work concurs (see for example:Bergen, 2002, Broadhead, 2010, Fisher, Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, Singer and Berk 2010, Smidt, 2011, Wohlwend, 2011, Lillard et al., 2013, Koole and Elbers, 2014, Yoon, 2014). In fact there is no research that has refuted Vygotsky's claims, although it has been suggested that the relationship between play and learning is elusive (Praming Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson, 2008).

Corsaro's (1997, 1985) work suggests that children are active, creative social agents, who construct their own 'peer culture' in which play is of central importance (Corsaro, 1985). My research investigates the value of role-play while children, within a peer culture, construe imaginary worlds (of role-play), and I will also suggest that this activity can be linked to longer term social and academic potential through focusing on learning language, learning through language and learning about language, as set out in RQ2.

The relationship between role-play and learning has been the focus of Vygotskian inspired psychological empirical research into role-play. Karpov (2005) explored behavioural and linguistic differences in and outside role-play and refers to early work by Istomona (1948 cited in Karpov, 2005:151) where children's word recall was found to be better in role-play than under experimental research conditions outside role-play. Other studies have reported similar findings, (for example Istomina 1977 cited in Bodrova, 2008:360). Children's self-regulation in role-play has also been the focus of research (Istomona, 1948 cited in Karpov, 2005:158) investigating how long 3-7 year old children could stand still. The findings showed the children role-playing a sentry stood still for longer than those who were not engaged in any role-play. While these are not linguistically focused studies, they show the influence of the imaginary situation on a child's engagement in the scenario.

Karpov (2005) argues that a Vygotskian approach to classroom role-play should include a description and explanation of the roles and relationships of the people involved in the pretend social encounter and cites Marshall's 1961 research where observations of 2-6 year old children showed enhanced role-play after the social roles had been described. Maximising the learning potential of classroom role-play within a Vygotskian lens is the focus of the work of Bodrova and Leong (Bodrova and Leong, 2003, 2006, Bodrova, 2008). Their work draws attention to teacher involvement in classroom role-play, and they suggest guidance be provided in making props and modelling how to use non-realistic props in ways that will scaffold the children's subsequent role-play. They also draw attention to the social roles that might be involved and suggest that the teacher should plan the play with the children. Bodrova and Leong's work does not, however, analyse any teacher introductions, and they do not focus in detail on the children's language choices, nor their effects on the play.

In both the Vygotskian and non-Vygotskian inspired research, learning in play appears undisputed, moreover it suggests that the learning potential for classroom role-play is vast, potentially spanning: language development (Bodrova, 2008); social development (Corsaro, 1985); development of thinking skills (Marjanovič-Umek and Lewnik-Mušek, 2001, Bourne, 2002); children's powers of imagination (Martin and Dombey, 2002) and literacy development (Fein, Ardila-Rey and Groth 2000, Pellegrini and Galda, 2000, Dyson, 2003, Bodrova and Leong, 2006, Sawyer, 2011, Hoyte et al., 2014). While these categories are all of value, they are, I suggest, quite broad and as a result may lead to uncertainties about precisely what and how children learn through role-play. This doctoral work is foremost a linguistic enquiry, and as the learning areas all involve some kind of language activity, I now focus on relevant literature that takes language as the focus.

2.4.2 The importance of talk in learning: learning language, learning through language and learning about language

Having discussed the importance of play in learning, I turn now to the value of talk in young children's learning. I organise this section using Halliday's observation that language and learning are positioned around three key points: learning language, learning through language and learning about language (Halliday, 1980/ 2003). While this tri-part focus centres on language, Halliday's position is that it is not simply language that is learned. Learning language is the clearest part of the phrase in that it is about new language. Learning through language is the construction of the world through 'common sense' and more formal 'educational learning' carried out, through language and most importantly through interaction. The final part is learning about language, and is explained by Halliday by drawing attention to the idea that, '...much of the learning that is relevant to education is not concerned with grammar at all, but with other things such as register variation, language and society, different media of expression in language and so on' (Halliday, 1980/ 2003:322). Learning about language draws attention to the conceptual

notions of genre and register (introduced in Section 2.3 and explored in more detail in Section 3.4), as productive ways to describe children's meaning-making in role-play. Halliday's three foci are not mutually exclusive, rather they are presented here as interdependent categories with blurred boundaries (and I return to this point in more detail in Chapter 7). I will discuss Halliday's theory of learning more broadly in Section 3.3.1, and draw here on empirical language research that has illuminated learning through talk.

Learning language

Language learning is highlighted by Halliday (1975), Painter (1991) and Torr (1997), researchers within the field of SFL, in their naturalistic studies of children's early language development. Painter argues that language learning occurs in a 'semantic space' (Painter, 1996:56). For Painter, whose research focuses on her own sons' language development, a child's language learning is mediated by the dialogue with their mother and is therefore a collaborative venture. Although Painter's empirical work focuses on an 'asymmetric' relationship (adult to child interaction), the relevance to my own study, where the interaction is symmetrical (child to child), is the importance of the social interaction through language and how this type of interaction might enable learning.

> From instances of language in use or 'texts', children gain experience in the functions and structures of the language, which enable them to construe the underlying network of choices that constitutes language as a system (Painter, 1996:52)

Learning new vocabulary and grammatical structures are an important part of language development and through which new language and new learning potential is enabled. Painter (1999a) highlights that new words lead to the creation, development and expansion of taxonomies. Painter finds that her naturalistic language data demonstrates how taxonomies emerge in a young child's language. She argues that the development of taxonomies is relevant as they are linked to the child's developing educational knowledge,

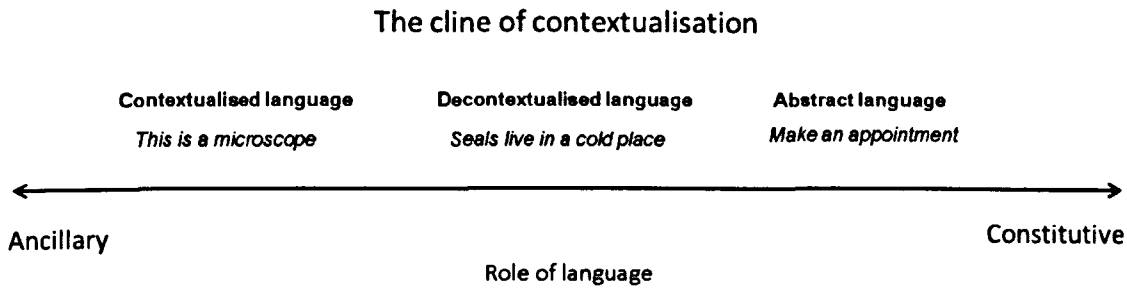
'educational knowledge is oriented to explicit reflection on meanings and the conscious understandings of their interrelationships' (Painter, 1999a:66).

Learning through language

If we accept that children will learn new language in social interactions, as Painter argues, they will also learn through that new language, that is to say learn in their new language. 'Learning through language' as positioned by Halliday (1980/ 2003), occurs as part of both informal 'common sense' learning and more formal 'academic learning'. Taking academic learning first, a child may learn new words of referents that are immediately observable in their surroundings from using and responding to language. This is perhaps a predictable and expected outcome of a child's developing language capabilities. What is perhaps less immediately obvious is their gradual development and learning of abstract and decontextualized meanings through talk. Painter suggests that the ability to engage with abstract notions is critical for school learning as 'many of the categories of educational knowledge cannot be inferred from observation because they depend on criteria which cannot be observed directly' (Painter, 1996:64). More commonly discussed in terms of writing, the use of decontextualized or abstract language is discussed elsewhere in the literature as being an important precursor to the development of literacy (Snow 1983) and academic language development more generally (Painter, 1996, Hasan, 2001, Torr and Simpson, 2003).

A child's ability to move a discussion from the 'here and now' to a decontextualized and abstract 'context' requires not simply new lexemes, but new ways of meaning realised through new grammatical structures. While decontextualised in Hasan's terms is 'something that is by its very nature incapable of being present in any spacio-temporal location whatever' (Hasan, 2001:409), Cloran (1999) presents a cline of language contextualisation that is useful in the consideration of young children's spoken language.

The cline (with example utterances from the role-play data) illustrates the possible movement between descriptions of what is immediately observable, to referents outside the immediate context to the abstract, as Figure 2 illustrates:



Adapted from Cloran 1999:37 (with language examples from role-play data)
Figure 2 Cloran's cline of contextualisation

Abstract and decontextualised meanings are realised (within the SFL framework) through ideational or grammatical metaphor (see Appendix I). Metaphor is seen 'from above' as a variation in the expression of meaning, rather than variation in meaning of a given expression (Taverniers, 2003). Torr and Simpson (2003), whose work considers classroom discourse, suggest that ideational metaphor provides the bridge for abstract thought requiring a manipulation of grammatical structures to construe these abstract meanings. I shall argue that classroom role-play provides an environment that stimulates both contextualised and emergent decontextualized and abstract meaning-making (see Chapter 7).

Literacy practices were highlighted in Roskos' (1991) work (discussed in Section 2.3.2) and explored in more detail in Hall's (2000) study in classroom role-play in a British school with 4-5 year old children. Hall observed children engaging with the literacy resources available in a play garage they had constructed in the classroom. One such literacy activity was to complete a job application to work in the garage. Although heavily guided by the teachers, Hall's argument was that the literacy activities allowed the children to

'develop their understanding of a garage as a situated social phenomenon' (Hall, 2000:203). This point is important in the consideration of learning in life-like social scenarios in role-play.

Examining the literacy practices of children in play in an American classroom through an interview, informal conversations, field notes and audio-recordings of children, Yoon (2014) found that the children demonstrated their learning from their literacy lessons in the observed play, and furthermore that the classroom play provided opportunities to situate the children's writing 'making it a purposeful practice rather than a decontextualized skill' (Yoon, 2014:110). In offering opportunities to contextualise writing in ways which appeal to the aspect of children's peer cultures, classroom role-play can be argued to provide a meaningful reason for engaging in literacy.

While the above literature sets out some benefits of role-play for later literacy skills, other work throws doubt on a clear link. For instance, Madel-Morrow and Schickendanz (2006) suggest that although research showed that children's literacy skills were in clear evidence in play situations, a causal relationship between play and literacy development is not easy to establish. Göncü and Katsaron (2000) highlight a lack of causal relationship as a need to establish more clearly and perhaps differently, how play can support literacy activities. A causal link may be difficult to establish, yet these studies do not examine in detail the language of the children that supports and surrounds the activities. I will argue that an understanding of the children's language will bring further insights into the relationship between role-play and learning.

The focus on literacy and numeracy practices in a discussion of children's learning is self-evident, they are considered central to intellectual development, and in addition important to a child's socialisation as Göncü and Katsarou (2000:224) note 'Socialization is defined as children's learning to use the tools of their society such as literacy'. It is accepted in

sociocultural theories of literacy, that literacy accomplishes social goals and these goals should be considered within the context of the social practices in which literacy is produced, 'reading, writing and speaking are used to accomplish social ends, to connect with others, and to communicate in different contexts' (Yoon, 2014:110). In classroom role-play children may have the opportunity to incorporate appropriate literacy activities into their construal of the various scenarios and to 'write' through the provision of pens and paper, for instance, taking an order in a cafe. Wohlwend (2011) goes as far as to suggest that play should be reconceptualised as a literacy practice, claiming that 'children use play to access literate identities as readers, writers, and designers, allowing them to become more proficient and critical text-users of print, image and action' (Wohlwend, 2011:11). I will continue to discuss other aspects of socialisation in the next section.

Learning about language

As highlighted at the start of Section 2.4.2, learning about language according to Halliday is linked to language as a sociocultural resource. Language learning and socialisation are inextricably linked in the anthropological work by Ochs and Schieffelin (1989, [1984] 2001). The research reported in this thesis does not aim to be a comprehensive study of language socialisation as it does not fit the framework suggested by Kulick and Schieffelin being neither ethnographic nor longitudinal, nor does it aim to 'demonstrate the acquisition (or not) of particular linguistic and cultural practices over time and across contexts' (Kulick and Schieffelin, 2004:350). However, I will argue that children in role-play use language that shapes, and is shaped by the sociocultural context that they are enacting. Ochs and Schieffelin suggest that, through social interaction, children develop their understanding of the affective stance of an utterance and are able to interpret utterances and respond appropriately through linguistic and extra-linguistic choices at the level of the word, clause and text. They also argue that children are socialised into their culture through their developing language. Ochs and Schieffelin's work focuses on ethnographic observations

of adult to child interactions, but their argument is still relevant to this study: children learn language while at the same time learning about the sociocultural values of different situations, and about appropriate ways of using language within these situations, hence learning about language.

Ochs and Schieffelin's point about the mutual shaping of language and cultural life is developed by Maybin (2013) who argues that 10-11 year-olds' informal peer discussion and re-performance of emotionally loaded texts from popular culture mediate their induction into the conventional construal of affect, judgement and aesthetic appreciation within social practice. More generally, she argues that children of this age group are constructing valuable knowledge within peer talk and interaction, which is not sufficiently acknowledged in most research on classroom talk and learning (Maybin 2006). Maybin's point is particularly relevant here, as role-play involves an informal and symmetrical child-child interaction in class, rather than an asymmetrical adult-child interaction in a teaching situation. The implication is that the child-led interaction in role-play may be also undervalued within school and dismissed as 'everyday language' and thereby less important to children's learning than 'academic' language that may occur in a more formal 'teaching' event. I would argue that the literature discussed suggests strongly that dialogic role-play is potentially not only a site where new words are learned, but also a site where children may develop sociocultural awareness, an aspect of learning about language.

The relationship between talk and socialisation in pretend play has been the focus of work by a number of researchers. Goodwin, for example, highlights that 'children enact vocal and nonvocal scripts appropriate to their relative positions in a pretend reality' (Goodwin 1993:160 cited in Kyratzis, 2004:629). Other researchers in the context of role-play research have pointed out the opportunities in role-play for socialisation, suggesting that the play context allows children to reflect on and develop their understanding of social

situations, cultural roles (Japiassu, 2008:382), and social competence (Bodrova and Leong, 2003, Praming Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson, 2008).

Children's learning of their social worlds is not a passive learning process, as Kyratzis (2007) highlights. Her ethnographic study of gender and socialisation of children between 4-5 years in two social scenarios, based on data from videotaped spontaneous pretend play, observations and field notes, suggests that 'pretend play may afford young pre-school-aged children a rich set of resources for accomplishing their social organization' (Kyratzis, 2007:323). Not only do they attempt to play out these social roles, but Kyratzis also found that the children replicate asymmetries in the adult world in role-play through the roles that they approximate. Furthermore, and highly relevant to this PhD work, Kyratzis' (2004) work on peer culture highlights that children's linguistic forms are directly associated with emerging social goals:

> By understanding how the linguistic forms that children use are suited to the social goals that they are seeking to accomplish in their peer social worlds, we can understand their communicative and social competence. (Kyratzis, 2004:642)

Socialisation has also been studied through forms of language repetition. Ochs Keenan's (1977) findings challenged the view held at the time that repetition was merely imitation (Moore, 2011). While researchers have since identified different types and functions of repetition, all agree on their value in relation to a child's socialisation (Pickert, 1985, Maybin, 2006, Goodwin and Kyratzis, 2007). Moore reviews four types of repetition in the literature: revoicing, prompting, guided repetition and language play. Repetition in these studies concerns the revoicing of another's utterance, or of their own words when reconstructing what they have said previously (for example: Maybin, 2006). One aspect of repetition that is touched on only briefly in the literature, is a child's repetition of their own language when the repetition occurs immediately. Moore suggests that 'novices may

use practices of repetition for their own purposes as well' (Moore, 2011:211) and I suggest that this is an interesting area which has not yet been explored.

Mitchell-Kernan and Kernan's work (1977) on children's directives in role-play (introduced in Section 2.3.1), emphasises the children's wish to elevate their social status (in the role-play). A child's emerging and growing understanding of their own and others' social place in the world can thus be traced through the way in which classroom role-play reflects sociocultural encounters where children have to 'accomplish' particular social goals within play. This makes the consideration of genre as a construct (discussed in Section 2.3.4), encoding the staged development of a goal-orientated interaction even more relevant as Derewianka suggests 'genres are socially constructed cultural artefacts' (2003:142). In the oral interaction of role-play as discussed in Section 2.3, empirical research has shown role-play to afford opportunities for children to make language choices that may differ from their normal day to day choices by mimicking indexical registerial language features of adult social roles that are possible only in play. Blum-Kulka et al. (2004) make a highly relevant observation in their work on the peer interaction in pretend play of 9 year olds, in that it provides 'children with opportunities to perfect their skills in different registers and rely on register-specific resources to build coherent play events' (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004:315), as I will discuss in more detail in Section 3.4.

Having discussed learning language, learning through language and learning about language, I turn now to focusing specifically on dialogue in the classroom, to explore existing work that has focused specifically on children's dialogic interaction and how children learn. I use this literature to underline my argument of the central importance of dialogue as a dynamic process in the co-construction of meaning and the relevance of dialogic interaction in how children learn.

2.4.3 Dialogue in classroom role-play

Dialogue is at the centre of Vygotsky and Halliday's theories of learning (outlined above and discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3), and I consider it as central in the consideration of the potential contribution of role-play to children's learning. Through the literature discussed in Section 2.3, it can be seen that within role-play children interact with their peers primarily through language; thus role-play can be understood as a form of dialogue. As the research site for my study is the classroom it is, therefore, relevant to discuss also empirical work that has focused on talk or more specifically dialogue and how it contributes to learning in the classroom. In Chapter 7 in relation to the children's interaction in particular, I will consider dialogue as a negotiated and dynamic co-creation of meanings between the children in a Bakhtinian (1981) sense, rather than a more 'question and answer' type exchange typical in teacher-pupil classroom discourse. However, I will consider research that has examined both asymmetrical (adult to child) and symmetrical (child to child) interaction as my doctoral work considers the related opportunities for learning in both the teacher introductions (teacher-child) and the role-plays themselves (child-child).

The importance of symmetrical dialogue in relation to learning is discussed in work by van Lier (2001). He contrasts the rich learning potential of a more equal dialogic exchange with what he suggests is the restrictive nature of the conventional 'initiation-response-feedback (IRF) exchange' structure of classroom language. His argument is that the IRF structure (originally identified by Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), typically between teacher and learner, does not provide as rich learning interactions as those that occur in more equal dialogic interactions between children. He argues that within an IRF exchange the teacher is 'unequivocally in charge' (van Lier, 2001:95), suggesting that 'the learners' side of the IRF is seriously curtailed.' (van Lier, 2001:97). Van Lier asserts that opportunities must be provided in the classroom where children can contribute more equally to the

interaction and learning experience than is possible within the IRF structure, yet how these are to be provided is not discussed.

The relationship of dialogic interaction to learning in the classroom has been researched extensively by Mercer and colleagues (for example: Mercer, 2000, Mercer and Littleton, 2007, Mercer, Warwick, Kershner and Kleine Staarman 2010, Mercer and Howe, 2012). This work provides detailed evidence of how different forms of dialogue facilitate children's learning and has explored both symmetrical and asymmetrical interactions. The findings have been used as a rationale for promoting the development of spoken language in the classroom. Mercer and Howe (2012), report that classrooms provide few opportunities for dialogue and therefore the dialogic space for learning, which is key in the Vygotskian approach. Although the children's discussion in their data is often centred on a specific learning point or problem-solving, which is a rather different type of talk from the dialogic interaction that occurs in role-play, Mercer's approach is highly salient to this doctoral work. Of particular relevance in Mercer's work, is the notion of Exploratory Talk, described as the collaborative construction of knowledge with speakers 'sharing knowledge, challenging ideas, evaluating evidence and considering options in a reasoned and equitable way' (Mercer and Howe, 2012:5). Mercer's work has explored Exploratory Talk in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, but not in the Early Years (Mercer, 2008), and in relation to problem solving rather than a context such as classroom role-play. However, the relevance to research into classroom role-play is highlighted in the citation here:

> ...studies of collaborative learning in naturalistic and experimental settings thus lead to the same conclusions: that collective, goal-directed, curriculum-based activity among students without a teacher present can offer distinctive and valuable benefits for students' learning (Mercer and Howe, 2012:6)

The potential of a dialogic analytic approach for capturing children's ongoing, dynamic meaning-making is demonstrated by Maybin's work on 10-11 year-old children's informal

language practices (discussed in relation to socialisation earlier in Section 2.4.2). Maybin (2006, 2013 and elsewhere) draws on children's informal conversations to explore how they use talk to learn about the social world in which they live (2006:10). This work is relevant to the discussion of children's dialogue in my own research as it highlights the learning that may be occurring in children's spontaneous dialogue outside the school curriculum, while they are seemingly 'off task' (cf. Dyson, 1994). The children in my study are at school, but I would argue that during role-play they may feel as if they are 'off task' in terms of their formal literacy and numeracy programmes. The children pursue particular roles in relation to the social encounter that has been primed, but many feel that they have the flexibility to do something else, for example colouring, or role-playing outside the suggested theme.

2.4.4 Section Summary

In this section I have outlined the relationship between play and learning, foregrounding the role of talk and dialogue. The empirical work discussed takes a broadly sociocultural perspective and in most cases is inspired by Vygotsky's theoretical work. While learning language might be understood as an obvious part of children's development, I have highlighted studies that consider how children's talk, their talk in play, and their talk in the classroom contribute to their learning of aspects of literacy practices, socialisation and also quite precise abstract areas such as decontextualised language. As Halliday suggests, '... in the course of the most ordinary linguistic interaction he [a child] is constantly learning the structure of the environment in which he is growing up, in all aspects – material, logical, institutional and social.' (Halliday, 1975/ 2003:283). While researchers all agree that language is a key vehicle for learning, little research has addressed classroom role-play in detail in relation to the central role of language in learning within this context.

The remainder of the chapter (Sections 2.5 and 2.6) now focuses on the Early Years curriculum in England and educational research that has explored the place of talk and play in this particular context.

2.5 Talk, play and learning: the link to the Early Years curriculum

The contribution of play to a child's early education has been, and continues to be, extensively theorised and researched. Froebel in the early 19th century is often cited as an early advocate for play within early childhood education, and his ideas were taken up in the 20th century by educationalists such as Dewey, Montessori and Hall (as discussed by Solar and Miller, 2010). Early childhood education received a high level of focus during the Labour government in the UK between 1997 and 2010 and new curricula were put in place with the aim of improving and extending the quality of education of children between birth and five years of age, termed the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). At the time of the data collection in 2013, the Conservative-led coalition government, then in place, had retained the essence of the EYFS curricula (Faulkner and Coates, 2013).

In Sections 2.3 and 2.4 I reviewed literature on children's peer talk, role-play and learning. While the principle site of learning under scrutiny here is a child-child role-play interaction, it is set in a classroom and therefore, for the teachers, has 'educational goals' alongside the children's own 'play goals'. In this section I review the documentation and research that concerns these educational goals and the provision of role-play in the context of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

2.5.1 Talk and play in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) describes the standards and level of care for children from birth to five years for all relevant settings (child minders, preschools, nurseries, schools).

> It [EYFS] promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. (Department for Education, 2012:2)

While this quotation cites 'school readiness', the children that form the focus of this study, at 4-5 years of age, are both in the final year of the EYFS curriculum yet also already in the first year of school. The EYFS thus bridges preschool education and the first year of school in the Reception Class. The EY curriculum is supported by the EYFS Profile, a mandatory framework authored by the Department for Education that sets out the EYFS areas of learning and early learning goals for children between birth and 5 years split into age groups. The EYFS Profile that was in place during the data collection (between January and June 2013) was archived in September 2014 and has been replaced with the current version effective from 1st September 2014. However, the relevant features of the two documents are identical.

The mandatory EYFS Profile sets out seven areas of learning and development (presented in Appendix II) and the early learning goals (the expected knowledge, skills and understanding that the children should have gained by the end of EYFS and of the first year of school, the Reception Class). While a study on classroom role-play aligns easily with the early learning goal of Communication and Language, four of the other areas of learning: Social Development, Literacy, Mathematics and Understanding the World are also highly relevant. The importance of play in a child's learning and development within the EYFS Statutory Framework is set out:

> Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development...Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults...(Department for Education, 2014:9)

However, in the same section, the document goes on to imply that the play in the early part of the child's life will be later replaced by activities for 'formal learning':

> As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1. (Department for Education, 2014:9)

To support practitioners in implementing the statutory requirements of the EYFS, the document *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage* sets out guidance for each age group. It appears that while communication and language are afforded a central presence in the EYFS, play at the later stages of the curriculum and role-play more specifically, as an enabler for learning is not given the same status. While role-play is mentioned as a resource, and teachers are instructed to 'Provide for, initiate and join in imaginative play and role-play, encouraging children to talk about what is happening and to act out the scenarios in character' (Early Education, 2012:18), the non-statutory status of the document suggests that the potential value of role-play in learning is not foregrounded nor fully recognised.

2.5.2 The place of talk and play in the curriculum

This section now considers educational literature that has taken the provision of role-play in the classroom as the site of research and problematised the relationship between policy and practice (from within and outside the context of the UK). The research reviewed

draws on methodologies such as observations and interviews to investigate the provision and impact of classroom role-play, in the context of the EYFS curriculum.

It is widely understood that Early Years education is important to a child's later academic and social success, as discussed in Section 2.4, moreover that play contributes to a child's learning at this early educational stage. However, a commitment to play in the implementation of policy is not straightforward, and Wood attributes this to 'tensions between 'play-based' approaches and the structured curriculum goals in national policy frameworks' (2014:4).

In the Northern Ireland Early Years context, Hunter and Walsh (2013) found that the tradition of play (including role-play) in school, was highly complex in practice due to competing priorities. Their questionnaire data highlighted two key areas: 'problematising play as learning and critiquing play as pedagogy' (Hunter and Walsh, 2013:30). Their findings suggested that while their practitioner participants valued play they had concerns about ensuring that the children were learning during play; and secondly the same teacher participants were unsure how and whether to intervene in children's play. This work highlights clearly that while theoretical and empirical work discussed so far in the chapter has pointed to the connection between children's learning talk and play, the move from policy to practice is not entirely straightforward.

Aubrey and Durmaz's (2012) work focuses on early childhood mathematics in England. Their research aim was to consider the relationship between the mathematics curriculum and classroom practice. They found, in the context of mathematics, that there exists a 'tension between a play-based pedagogy and a standards agenda' (Aubrey and Durmaz, 2012). This tension is taken up outside England in Sandberg and Heden's (2011) work into practitioners' understanding of play (and role-play) in children's learning in Sweden. Their work focused on the categories of learning, development, teaching and socialisation

through semi-structured interviews with teachers, and their findings were articulated in terms of the teachers' opinions of what is learned through role-play focusing on social interaction and aspects of socialisation. While in their findings role-play is cited as important, and play as essential, they note that 'there was a certain hesitation regarding play in the school world. Play during breaks was one thing, but play used in teaching was not seen as equally natural' (Sandberg and Heden, 2011:326). This finding underlines the difficulty of moving from policy to practice reported by Hunter and Walsh (2013) noted above.

Reunamo, Lee, Wu, Wang, Mau and Lin (2013) focus on the implementation of play in the classroom in their study in Finland and Taiwan. They interviewed children about their perceptions of role-play and carried out observations of children in role-play. The research attempts to draw attention to ways in which role-play can be made more successful and accessible. They found that the children needed enough time for their play to develop and ideally the provision of a dedicated place for the play. Furthermore they found that adult intervention was not always needed, although they acknowledged that 'sometimes it is good for the educator to become involved with children's developing processes and enrich them when needed' (Reunamo et al., 2013:303). This finding is supported in the work by Bodrova and Leong (Bodrova and Leong, 2003, 2006, Bodrova, 2008), who found a positive impact on children's learning from teachers' involvement. They draw on Elkonin's ([1978] 2005) work suggesting that teachers involvement is beneficial when teachers model play scenarios and in particular when the modelling centres on the roles involved in the scenario (discussed earlier in Section 2.4.2). Bodrova and Leong's work goes so far as to remove further the spontaneity of the role-play scenario by allowing the children and teachers to plan the roles and how the play will unfold. They argue that to allow children to exploit the potential of role-play they should be supported as fully as possible by teacher input. This point is interesting but implies

that the children's learning stems primarily from teaching and it does not foreground the peer-led interactions in the role-play, which I will argue are important.

Rogers and Evans' (2006, 2007, 2008) work offers insights into the link between the provision of role-play in the Reception Class and the children's responses to that provision. The ethnographic study of role-play in three Reception Classes in England draws on data that include informal conversations with their child participants, observations and questionnaires. Findings suggested that the teachers understood role-play to be vital to language and social development (Rogers and Evans, 2008). However, Rogers and Evans state quite categorically that there are tensions between the teacher agendas and the agenda of the children. They found that the children were able to connect the theme of the role-play area with the theme of the curriculum, for example, in literacy activities, and that they expressed an enjoyment of being in the role-play area and taking on roles and pretending. In contrast to Bodrova and Leong's position discussed above, the role of the teacher is not reflected from a completely positive perspective (Rogers and Evans, 2007). They argue that interruptions to the play, such as calling children away from the role-play area were 'the single most disruptive factor in the quality of children's role-play' because 'children appeared to need time to negotiate roles and develop their ideas' (Rogers and Evans, 2007:160). While the work (together with Reunamo et al., 2013, Bodrova and Leong, 2003), provides insight into the practical aspects of the provision of role-play (such as space to play) within the curriculum focus of the Reception Class and the perceptions of the children and teachers, their data do not focus on the specifics of the language used by the children in their role-plays and therefore insight into what actually happens, in terms of the children's interaction, is potentially limited.

The use of props in the role-play area was discussed in Section 2.2.3 above and it is also a focus of attention in educational literature. Smidt (2011) highlights the potential for

children to use objects symbolically (echoing Vygotsky 1978). However, while the linguistically focused literature focused on props in positive terms, in the practitioner focused literature the attitude toward the use of props is much less favourable. Realistic props are cited as restrictive, (Rogers and Evans, 2007), and the use of non-realistic props are seen as requiring input from the teacher to model how they can be incorporated into the play (Bodrova and Leong, 2003). Bodrova and Leong's work is positioned as a Vygotskian approach and, as a result, proposes the benefits of non-realistic props.

Data considered in the educational studies discussed above draws on observations and teacher and child interviews and has, as I have discussed, provided general statements about the value of role-play. These value statements (see for example Bodrova and Leong, 2003) are useful, as are the findings of the provision of role-play from a practical perspective. Missing from these studies is an understanding of how classroom role-play is conducted by the children at a detailed level, and as a consequence, they are only able to illuminate quite general findings. These general insights, I have suggested, may contribute to the tensions between the teachers' agenda, and the use of role-play as a resource for learning. Earlier I suggested that the broad categories of learning need to be more precise to be convincing to practitioners. Stephen (2010) calls for a review of the contribution of play to ensure that the opportunities offered are 'playful and engaging ...' (Stephen, 2010:19). Whilst I agree with Stephen's appeal, additional studies with similar methodologies like those described above that do not focus on the actual language will fail to provide much more insight into the world of children's role-play. A detailed level of understanding can only really be accessed through close attention to the language used by the children engaged in the play.

Lacking also in this body of literature is an acknowledgement of the regulative language of role-play that I discussed in Section 2.3. An acknowledgement of the regulative element of role-play is required in order to understand role-play as a complete learning interaction

in the classroom enabled by language. As language is the key enabler for the communication in classroom role-play and in learning, I argue that language should be the focus of empirical work. A language-rich study, that is one where actual language is recorded, transcribed and analysed, has the potential to illuminate the relationship between the language used in play and learning, resulting in a better understanding of what is learned during role-play and how it is learned.

As well as the curriculum documentation that has already been discussed, children's language is a topic that is often part of media headlines. While media perception does not form part of this study, it is worth acknowledging here briefly as media headlines are influential. When headlines and comments on children's language focus on 'grammatical correctness', children's broader and more subtle meaning-making capabilities are overlooked, and their language is reduced to an assessment of grammar. These narrow interpretations of language can be seen in resources available on-line. For example, while charities such as ICAN in the UK do much to bring attention to language support for children with difficulties with language, some of the resources on the ICAN website talkingpoint (www.talkingpoint.org.uk/), might be seen to encourage a preoccupation with 'grammatical correctness' rather than meaning-making, suggesting that children of 4-5 years will:

> Use sentences that are well formed. However, they may still have some difficulties with grammar. For example, saying 'sheeps' instead of 'sheep' or 'goed' instead of 'went'. (The Communication Trust, 2015)

Elsewhere in language research, steps are being made to distance perceptions from deficit type models of language such as these (cf. Leedham, 2015), and as I will argue, a focus on language as meaning-making has the potential to reveal a much more insightful understanding of children's language.

2.6 Chapter 2 Conclusions

The main aim of this literature review has been to select, make salient and illuminate links between research into children's talk, play and learning. The first part of the chapter offered a discussion of register, props and regulative utterances in role-play that have been, thus far, noted in the research findings in this area. I consider these findings to provide a basis on which a more complex dynamic description of classroom role-play can be articulated. To this end, I reviewed work that has used the notion of genre in children's talk in order to understand how this construct might be useful in exploring how classroom role-play unfolds dynamically.

The relationship between play, talk and learning formed the focus of the second part of the discussion in Section 2.4 where I foregrounded the contribution of language. I argued that both asymmetrical and symmetrical dialogue are the essential interconnecting links between play and learning, and that through dialogic interaction children learn language, learn through language and learn about language. I discussed how in empirical work on dialogue between mother and child, emerging skills in classifying the world, cause-effect meanings and the use of decontextualised and abstract language were found and how these areas of linguistic capability are considered foundational to academic learning. Other work provided evidence of how socialisation into the cultural context of the children's worlds, and the highly valued educational skills of literacy and numeracy practices can be learned through social dialogic interaction. The final section focused on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the provision of role-play as an enabling learning environment to foster these skills in the Reception Class. I suggested that while communication and language are afforded a central presence in the EYFS, play and specifically classroom role-play are not given the same status.

While the educational work into classroom role-play highlights broad level statements about its value, it draws attention to the difficulties in moving from policy to practice. The tensions surrounding the value of role-play, it seems, may be understood in part by a perception that while it is accepted that children learn during play, the learning is not considered 'academic' learning. The second point concerns the paucity of research closely examining linguistic and non-linguistic interaction. What really happens when young children role-play? Questions about children's lexicogrammatical choices and the effect that they have on meaning remain only partly answered. The children create roles such as doctor or waiter, but how are these roles really accomplished through their language? How does their language use relate to other semiotic resources? I suggest that these unanswered questions, in part, may be due to the focus and methodologies used in educational research, which have not been able to establish convincing evidence of the link between learning and classroom role-play. Further studies that rely solely on teacher interviews and observations will continue to show similar findings as have been discussed in this chapter. As a result I propose that a fresh perspective is needed to drive forward the field that places the children's language as the central concern. Classroom role-play research needs to be extended by methodologies that allow a more precise consideration of language to really enhance the detail of the findings and to establish a firmer understanding of how children role-play and the benefits that this interaction brings.

> Spontaneous utterances in play can provide one of the best possible windows onto the child's developing language and understanding of their world (Andersen, 1990; Vygotsky, 1967) although they are perhaps relatively rarely the primary source of data for assessment and other research purposes. (Gillen and Hall 2010:22)

Classroom role-play competes for space and time in the classroom against other curriculum demands, and a greater and more detailed understanding of how this activity contributes to learning is required. When a child achieves full marks in a spelling test a tangible and quantifiable level has been reached. In this type of situation policy makers,

teachers and parents can all be satisfied that teaching and learning has occurred. The benefits of learning in role-play are less easily quantifiable and as a result, it appears more difficult to truly convince practitioners and parents of their benefits (cf. Brooker, 2010). I suggest that some of the broad categories of learning from the literature need to be more precisely articulated in order to make salient the links between what is learned in classroom role-play and how these areas of learning relate to academic skills.

I argue that through a close analysis of the children's language in classroom role-play it is possible to illuminate how children construe a life-like social scenario; furthermore it is possible to identify what is learned in classroom role-play and how this learning builds the foundations for academic and non-academic learning. These two main avenues of the research are reflected in the Research Questions set out in Chapter 1. Blum-Kulka and Snow (2004), note that 'child-child talk has been studied relatively unsystematically and with little attention to its potential consequences for development' (2004:292). This observation is also the challenge for this study, in other words, to bring a systematic approach to the study of children's peer to peer talk in the context of classroom role-play in order to further the current understanding of how children create meaning in classroom role-play and the potential for learning. In Chapter 3, I discuss the theoretical frameworks of Vygotsky and of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). These frameworks have been used to develop the fine-grained analysis enabling me to address the research questions guiding this empirical work.

3 Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

Through a discussion of seminal and recent empirical work on children's talk and play in Chapter 2, I showed that there is an enduring interest in the oral language capabilities of young children and the connection between play and learning. I presented a rationale for the significance of research on classroom role-play to the fields of applied linguistics and Early Years' education. I discussed that while psychologists, linguists, educationalists and practitioners alike agree on the centrality of language to children's learning, and studies of children's role-play have provided valuable insight into the benefits of classroom role-play in general terms, little attention has been paid in detail to the children's actual language. As a result, little is known about how meanings are dynamically created by children in classroom role-play, and as such it has proven difficult to pin down exactly how these interactions provide opportunities for learning language, learning through language and learning about language.

The limited knowledge of what happens in classroom role-play can be attributed partly to the theoretical framings and methodologies employed in some of the research. Those that draw mainly on observations and interviews, and do not focus on the actual language that is used, are restricted in terms of addressing precise relationships between language, meaning-making and learning within this context. In Chapter 3, I discuss how a different perspective can be brought to the study of children's classroom role-play through a synthesis of constructs and tools from SFL, enriched by the Vygotskian concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). I set out in detail the theoretical approach of the research in response to the research questions:

RQ1: How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?

(a) How are role-plays organised?

(b) How do lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices influence role-play?

RQ2: What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

I begin by discussing Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of language and learning, then Halliday's language-based theory of learning. I explain the theoretical constructs that are directly relevant to this study that will be used in Chapter 4 to build the analytical framework for the research. Through the discussion I draw attention to aspects of complementarity between Vygotsky's and Halliday's theoretical approaches.

3.2 Sociocultural theory of language and learning: Vygotsky

Sociocultural theory treats language and learning as social and cultural phenomena (Swann, Deumert, Lillis and Mesthrie 2004). Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) theories of learning are regarded as being the foundations of sociocultural research (Mercer and Howe, 2012), and his work drew attention to language as mediating learning and development. Learning and development are two differentiated processes in Vygotsky's work, yet, '...interrelated from the child's very first day of life' (Vygotsky, 1978:84). On the one hand, learning is an external and social process mediated through language. Development, on the other hand, synonymous with cognitive (rather than physical) development, is enabled by the external social interaction. I explain the two notions and their relationship to language in Vygotsky's work in Section 3.2.1 below.

3.2.1 Vygotsky: The role of talk in a child's development and learning

Talk or speech in social interaction is a primary form of mediation in Vygotsky's terms. Vygotsky was interested in language as speech and not language as the system (Wertsch, 1979). In an observation on Vygotsky's work *Thought and Language* (1986), Wertsch (1979) notes that a mistranslation of the work from Russian has led to this work being published under the title Thought and Language rather than Thought and Speech. This point is important because it aligns with Halliday's differentiation between language as a system, and language as text (speech in Vygotsky's terms) as an instance of that system (I develop this point further in Section 3.3.2) and is one way in which Vygotsky and Halliday's theories can be said to be complementary.

Vygotsky considered the primary function of speech to be communication with others, that is to say social dialogue (1986). He theorised that there are two types of children's early speech, firstly when the child is in dialogue with another person, and secondly 'egocentric speech' when the child speaks aloud to him or herself. The significance of egocentric speech within Vygotsky's theory is that this 'thinking aloud' becomes internalised into 'inner speech' or thought, facilitating cognitive development. It is therefore the continuous pathway of social speech (i.e. dialogue) through egocentric speech and finally 'inner speech' that Vygotsky links to a child's higher mental functions and cognitive development as illustrated in Figure 3:

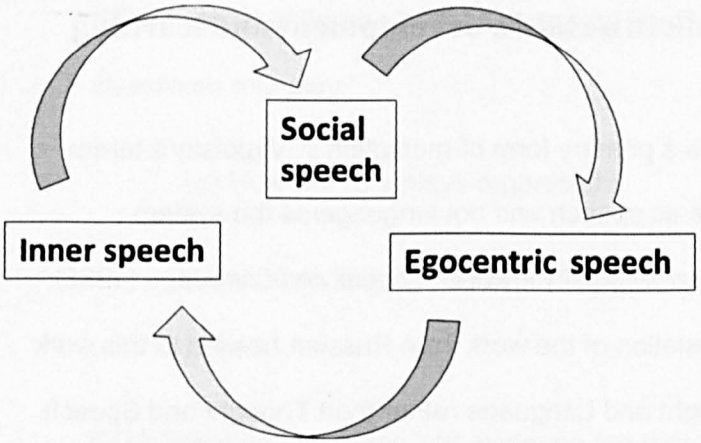


Figure 3 Vygotsky's social, egocentric and inner speech

The cyclical aspect to Figure 3 illustrates that there is no beginning nor end point to the process, and as Vygotsky notes, the development is 'a spiral, passing through the same point at each new revolution while advancing to a higher level' (1978:56).

Vygotsky defines development as a shift from elementary mental processes, such as memory, attention, perception and thinking ('of biological origin') to higher mental processes ('of sociocultural origin') which advance through language in social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978:46). Children's development is theorised on two levels, the first being a reflection of what they can already do, and the second being what they can do with guidance, which in turn contributes to their development. Mediation in the form of language in social interaction (dialogue) is argued to promote the higher mental functions, that is to say development. As development for Vygotsky is rooted in social interactions, the higher mental functions necessarily include the cultural development of the child.

In a discussion of development, Vygotsky states unequivocally that play is 'the leading source of development in preschool years' (Vygotsky, 1966:6). As learning (as discussed in Section 3.2) is the external social process mediated through language that contributes to development, Vygotsky's stress on the relevance of play to a child's development necessarily implicates the relevance of play to learning, and thus the relevance to research that explores language in play as part of a learning process. As a result

Vygotsky's theory can be said to provide a theoretical position that underpins the aims of this thesis.

Vygotsky separates learning that occurs inside and outside school, suggesting that school learning is the 'assimilation of the fundamentals of scientific knowledge' (1978:84). Vygotsky's work at this point is ambiguous. On the one hand he suggests that play is a 'leading source of development', but on the other, in stating that school is for 'scientific knowledge' he appears to implicitly exclude the learning in play (that now occurs in the first year of school) as not being something that will contribute to scientific knowledge and school learning. It follows therefore, that any learning in classroom role-play would not lead, according to Vygotsky, to 'scientific knowledge', but rather more to common-sense learning, or learning that occurs 'preschool' (Vygotsky, 1978:84). The implications of this might be that play (and therefore role-play) is not considered of value in the development of 'scientific knowledge'. This inference is somewhat problematic, and given the influence of Vygotsky's work in education and educational research, this dichotomy may be one possible reason for the continuing tension between play and school learning in the Reception Class.

3.2.2 The Zone of Proximal Development

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is the theoretical construct developed by Vygotsky in response, as Wertsch (1985) suggests, to a need to address the problem of 'the assessment of children's intellectual abilities and the evaluation of instructional practices' (Wertsch, 1985:67). The ZPD has been pivotal in sociocultural research on the role of dialogue in teaching and learning situations. It describes the difference between a child's actual development level, and their potential development level that occurs in interaction with others. Vygotsky, describes the construct as the *zone of proximal*

development, yet his definition includes a reference to the 'potential' as his definition below highlights:

> ... the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978:86)

As a result, in some literature the construct is also referred to as the zone of potential development (see for example Brown and French, 1979).

For Vygotsky, the key driver of development is speech or dialogue (as discussed earlier), therefore, dialogue is central in the conceptualisation of the ZPD and fundamental to the external process of learning. Vygotsky suggests 'learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers' (Vygotsky, 1978:90). There are three important implications of this statement. First, social interaction mediates learning and consequently enables development, as discussed in the previous section. Second, the environment in which the dialogue takes place has an important contributory role. Finally, learning can take place in collaboration with peers. While these points may appear to be self-evident, it was Vygotsky who first articulated them, and they reinforce the salience of the ZPD and the selection of a Vygotskian sociocultural lens to this research.

The ZPD has been used successfully to measure the learning potential for children in task based activities in schools (see for example: Mercer, 2004, 2010, Mercer et al., 2010, Mercer and Howe, 2012). In the research reported in this thesis, the ZPD will be applied to role-play, which has no precisely defined measures of success. The operationalisation

of the ZPD in relation to this research and the details of the role-plays will be explained in detail in Chapter 4.

Extending the ZPD through Scaffolding

Strongly associated with educational studies, scaffolding has become a commonly used term in sociocultural research. Scaffolding is a construct attributed to the psychologist Bruner (Wood, Bruner, Ross 1976, Bruner, 1978), and was developed in response to Vygotsky's ZPD to describe the process by which a child has the opportunity to extend their ZPD (Christie, 2005). Scaffolding is treated somewhat differently in the two original papers. In the first, Wood et al. (1976) focus on an activity in which children must complete a specific task 'whereby an adult or "expert" helps somebody who is less adult or less expert' (Wood et al., 1976:89). The implication here is that someone is consciously imparting some knowledge during a defined activity. The later work (1978) is a lecture in which Bruner opens up the application of scaffolding from the support in a defined task to more informal teaching of language skills between a mother and child. While in both papers the authors draw attention to the notion that someone assists, or scaffolds the learning of another, the differences also signal the beginning of a variation in the way in which the term is used. I outline below some of the ways in which it has been employed in empirical research.

The scaffolding metaphor, as Maybin, Mercer and Stierer point out is 'elusive ... and problematic in practice' (Maybin et al., 1992:188). They pose the question "scaffolding' is clearly a form of help; but what kind of help is it? What are the specific features which distinguish scaffolding from other forms of assistance?' (Maybin et al., 1992:188). They argue that it should be seen as an interactional process between the teacher and the student that enables an extension of the student's ZPD, and not simply contained within the behaviour of the teacher. Furthermore, they argue evidence is required to

demonstrate that the teacher is enabling the learning, and evidence is needed of the learner being able to achieve something that can be attributed to the scaffolding.

The notion of scaffolding starts to become important to the research reported in this thesis as the influence of language is foregrounded and the potential scope is distanced from specific tasks as Mercer highlights:

> ... the concept of 'scaffolding' must be reinterpreted to fit the classroom. One useful step would be to get away from the imagery of concrete, physical tasks like doing jigsaws or weaving cloth. Education is not about the physical manipulation of objects. A great deal of it is learning how to use language (Mercer, 1995:74-75)

More recently, a linguistic lens has been applied to scaffolding by Hammond and Gibbons (2005, Gibbons, 2006) whose work aimed 'to investigate what scaffolding actually 'looked like' as it was played out in the day-to-day enacted curriculum, and to analyse its enactment more closely both in pedagogical and linguistic terms' (Hammond and Gibbons, 2005:7-8). Their resulting model, has two tiers: macro and micro aspects of teacher-student interaction. Macro-scaffolding is consciously planned by the teachers including 'the ways in which classroom goals are identified: how classrooms are organised; and in the selection and sequencing of tasks' (Hammond and Gibbons, 2005:12). Micro-scaffolding describes more spontaneous teaching. This development of the earlier concepts of scaffolding is potentially useful in an examination of the teacher introduction to the role-plays. However, Hammond and Gibbons' model focuses on teaching in the learning process and as a consequence, their focus is the teacher behaviours. They do not address the potential role of the students in their own learning, and how the children may scaffold each other unintentionally and serendipitously (although this involves an extension of the original concept). This point is relevant to my research on classroom role-play, as the role-plays themselves are peer-led interactions with no teacher present.

Forman's (2008) work on English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms places more focus on the student and reinforces the point highlighted earlier by Maybin et al., (1992) that scaffolding is a process in which evidence must be sought from the student to confirm its presence or absence. Forman raises an important finding from his research that the student's responses are restricted by the typical teacher-student classroom interaction or Initiation Response Feedback (IRF) exchange. This point was also made earlier in Section 2.4.3 in relation to van Lier's (2001) work and will be considered in the conceptualisation of learning in classroom role-play in this doctoral research.

Building on the research discussed, it is interesting to consider how types of scaffolding behaviour can theoretically account for the learning that might occur in the highly dialogic context of classroom role-play outside the typical teacher-child classroom interaction. There is no single definition of what counts as scaffolding, yet it has been, and continues to be, a valuable metaphor in describing instances of teaching in particular. I will argue that it is not only the teacher introductions and the immediate responses from the children that are important in terms of scaffolding behaviour, but in addition the children's appropriation and take up of the teachers' priming in the role-plays that may be carried out days later. Furthermore, attention must be paid to the way in which children scaffold and extend their peers' ZPDs during the role-plays themselves, both explicitly as 'experts', and implicitly in more serendipitous opportunities. In Section 4.4.3, I propose a theoretical frame to describe the learning opportunities in classroom role-play, which draws heavily on the work of scaffolding, but aims to foreground learning (as opposed to teaching) within the unique interaction of classroom role-play.

I now turn to Halliday's theory of learning. Although this emerged from the field of linguistics rather than psychology, it resonates strongly with Vygotsky's learning theory

from the perspective that language and social interaction, in both theories, mediate learning.

3.3 Halliday and Systemic Functional Linguistics

An outline of Vygotskian learning theory and the concept of the ZPD was presented in the first part of Section 3.2, and I argued for its place in illuminating opportunities for learning in classroom role-play. In this section, I begin by outlining Halliday's language-based theory of learning, and then I present the key constructs from SFL relevant to this study. I draw specifically on work from the field of SFL, beginning with Halliday's (1970, 1973, 1975) early theoretical work.

3.3.1 Halliday's theory of learning

Halliday suggests that 'the ontogenesis of language is at the same time the ontogenesis of learning (1993:93), and he argues for a 'language based theory of learning' that is to say a theory whose foundation and centre is language and the role of language is considered integral to learning.

> In order to be taught successfully, it is necessary to know how to use language to learn; and also, how to use language to participate as an individual in the learning situation. These requirements are probably not a feature of any particular school system, but rather are inherent in the very concept of education. (Halliday, 1970:35-36)

As a linguist, Halliday's starting point is language and his work on the link to learning begins with a focus on using language and 'learning how to mean'. 'Learning how to mean' for Halliday is a rather different process to a child's language acquisition or

language development as traditionally theorised, suggesting that 'the learning of language is essentially the learning of a semantic system' (Halliday, 1973:9), and this idea is central to SFL. Halliday's work on the relationship between language and learning appears to have started during his work documenting the language development of his son (1975). Halliday discusses a young child's ability to use metalanguage or 'language about language' to enable their own learning through what he refers to as the 'imagination function' (Halliday, 1970:32), where a child uses 'language to create his own environment; not to learn about how things are but to make them as he feels inclined' (Halliday, 1970:32). Halliday suggests that the terms 'story', 'make up', and 'pretend' are examples of this early metalanguage. These terms clearly resonate with a make-believe role-play type activity as the children use language to create an imagined context.

Halliday distinguishes between different types of learning: educational and common sense, as discussed in relation to Vygotsky in Section 3.2.1 above. Educational knowledge for Halliday is created in school, 'language itself is going to be treated as educational knowledge, rather than just common-sense knowledge.' (Halliday, 1980/ 2003:314). Painter (1996, 1999a, b) and Cloran (1999) draw attention to types of language that prepare children for the sort of learning in which they will be involved at school (discussed in Section 2.4.2). However, the broad distinctions of Halliday and Vygotsky (discussed above) between learning in school and learning at home, I suggest, are not subtle enough to describe young children's learning in the context of the Reception Class, in particular as play is a feature of the classroom in which learning may extend beyond 'common sense learning'.

Visible and invisible mediation

Visible and invisible mediation are two constructs that have been developed in response to Halliday's theory of learning (Hasan, 2003). They are used to describe and distinguish

between formal and informal teaching. As Hasan points out, mediation requires at least two participants, and therefore cannot occur in the absence of some form of social interaction: learning 'involves the active participation of the learners in their learning' (Hasan, 2003:196). Visible mediation is described as teaching, and Hasan contrasts this with invisible mediation which is where interactants are not aware of any teaching and are engaged in 'some process of everyday living' (Hasan, 2003:197) and Hasan highlights its importance:

> ...from the point of view of the development of an individual, invisible mediation is primary, both in terms of time and in terms of its pervasiveness, because it begins from very early infancy and it occurs across a large number of cultural activities (Hasan, 2003:197)

Hasan's concept of mediation has been taken up in recent empirical work to position language or meaning-making centrally in both teaching and learning processes (Coffin and Donohue, 2014). Although dealing with a tertiary learning context, Coffin and Donohue make the point that language is often 'invisible' in teaching and learning. This observation is relevant to classroom role-play contexts where the priming and the subsequent instantiations of the role-plays are carried out primarily (although not exclusively) through language, but where language is not necessarily the focus of the interaction.

I have outlined the two theories of language and learning that underpin this study in relation to RQ2: What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play? I now turn to the other part of the research focus and RQ1, How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play? In order to answer RQ1, I draw on the theoretical framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). I begin by outlining the key theoretical principles of SFL and highlight where these align with

Vygotskian theoretical positioning, described in Section 3.2.1. I then discuss the constructs that will be used in this study and justify the selection of SFL as the combined theoretical and analytical framework.

3.3.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics: key theoretical principles

Halliday's theoretical approach to learning is linked to his work on the theorisation of language and his model of language, SFL (1975, 2004, 2014). SFL posits that language be viewed as a 'system of meaning' (Halliday, 2003). There are four theoretical points from SFL that are relevant to this thesis, and that form the rationale for using SFL over other relevant theoretical frameworks (some of which I will outline in Section 3.5 below).

First, language is considered from the perspectives of system and instantiation, that is to say, 'The system is the underlying potential of a language: its potential as a meaning-making resource' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014:27). Second and linked to the underlying principle of the system is the notion of choice. Language users make linguistic choices that impact on the meaning that they wish to create. The notion of 'choice' is a central part of SFL theory (Fontaine et al., 2013), and SFL proposes that the system consists of a range of functional choices from which language users create meaning. Choice in SFL terms is not defined as, nor limited to 'conscious' choice, and this raises an important point in that for children in particular and for language users in general, we are restricted based on what choices are available to us in terms of our own potential. I will argue that role-play has the potential to offer children new language choices as it encourages them to understand and create meanings that are outside their existing repertoire and social role, such as 'being' a shop assistant or 'being' a waiter. Berry suggests, 'Teachers see themselves as extending the range of choices open to their students.' (2013:383). Building on Berry's observation, I explore not only how teachers can extend the range of choices, but also how the students themselves can collaboratively

extend their range of choices, returning to the point I made earlier about children contributing themselves to their own learning, serendipitously and as 'experts'.

The third point is that text, within SFL theory, is bound in a dialectal relationship with context. Context is realised through language, yet language simultaneously construes context. Finally, Halliday theorises that at any point, a spoken utterance or written sentence performs three simultaneous functions described as metafunctions: ideational; interpersonal and textual. The ideational metafunction construes a reflection of the world; the interpersonal function reflects how language is used to build and maintain relationships; the textual metafunction realises the way in which the first two are expressed through a coherent discourse and particular channel (for example in speech or writing). Language, whether spoken or written may be analysed in terms of these three metafunctions, to illuminate how particular choices realise particular contexts.

These four points highlight SFL as a highly relevant theoretical basis for this study. It considers language in terms of the meaning to illuminate how a particular and specific context is linguistically construed. In Section 2.5.2, I highlighted that children's language is often considered in terms of 'grammatical correctness'. In this study I explore children's language not in terms of 'grammatical correctness' as it is traditionally described, but how individual and collective utterances have the ability to construe particular meanings. This positioning is significant with the child participants in this study being 4-5 years old and having an emerging understanding of grammatical forms and vocabulary.

The description of the children's language through an SFL lens, as discussed above, will be enabled by the complex analytical framework developed by Halliday and other scholars in the field (for example Halliday and Hasan, 1985, Martin, 1992, 2010, Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014). Linguistic analysis using SFL tools is possible at the level of the clause and the longer text. This point is important for this study as I will consider the

children's language at both levels. Clause level and discourse semantic level analyses enable detailed descriptions of texts that reflect the topic, the relationship between the language users and the level of interactivity, and the role of language (described as field, tenor and mode discussed more fully in Section 3.4.2[3]). SFL thus offers a theoretical and analytical framework for the study of language in context, and therefore an analytical tool for a study of meaning-making and learning in classroom role-play (in Section 3.5 I will outline other possible approaches that also use naturalistic data). The SFL analytical framework provides a structure to the language analysis, enabling the articulation of how particular language choices construe meaning. I now discuss the key constructs from SFL that I draw on in this study. The analytical operationalisation of these constructs is discussed in Section 4.3.3.

3.4 Key constructs from Systemic Functional Linguistics: context of situation, register and genre

The three SFL theoretical concepts of context of situation, register and genre are fundamental to the description of children's meaning-making in my research. I will outline each of the terms and their interwoven nature. I begin with the notion of context and use the discussion to provide some background to the terminology and discuss the ways in which context, and the interconnected terms of genre and register, have been conceptualised within SFL. I draw attention to the differing conceptualisations of the terms in the work of Halliday and Hasan (1985), with that of Martin and Rose (1992, 2002, 2014). For a detailed discussion of the differences between the two approaches see Hasan (1995).

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[3] All terms are included in the glossary in Appendix I. Following Coffin, Donohue and North 2009, I have not capitalised the SFL terms.

3.4.1 Context of situation

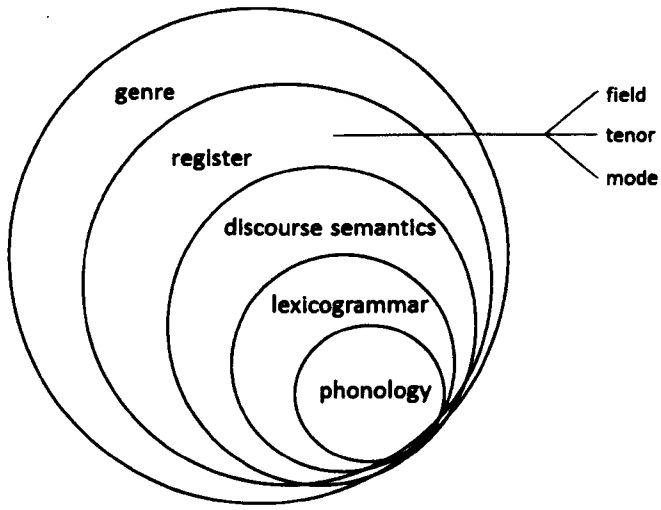
The notion of context is foundational in SFL theory (as highlighted in Section 3.3.2), and the relationship between language and context has long been established. The first account of the interwoven relationship is attributed to anthropologist Malinowski (1922) who coined the term 'context of situation'. Malinowski carried out fieldwork with the people from the Trobriand archipelago in their own language. In attempting to then 'translate' his work to people (and cultures) outside the Trobriand Islands he found that in order to understand the translated language about the islands' culture and practices, one had to understand the language context in which it was produced (Halliday, 1985). Building on this, the relationship between language and context (and in particular the idea of meaning within and between these two notions), was conceptualised further into a linguistic framework by Firth ([1935] 1957). The concept was then developed by Halliday (a student of Firth) to become a key notion within SFL theory (as discussed in Section 3.3.2), 'For the description of a language to be of the greatest use, it must account for contextual as well as formal patterns' (Halliday, 1980/ 2003:40). Thus within SFL, meaning cannot be separated from the context in which it is produced, and which it simultaneously construes. While Vygotsky touches on the influence of the context in which social speech occurs, as discussed above, the notion of context is more explicitly theorised in the work of SFL, and continues to be developed (Bowcher, 2014, Hasan, 2014, Martin, 2014). In this sense, SFL provides an important complementary dimension to Vygotskian work.

Within SFL there are two approaches to the way in which context is explained. Context or context of situation (Halliday and Hasan, 1985) is a theoretical construct to describe the linguistic and relevant non-linguistic behaviours and factors that impinge directly on the text thereby construing the situation itself. Context of situation is articulated through what Hasan describes as the contextual configuration (Hasan, 1985) and the three variables of

field, tenor and mode (FTM). Field describes the sort of social activity which is on-going. Tenor describes how relationships are built and maintained within the interaction and the relative social relations. Finally mode is concerned with the channel of communication, and features such as levels of spontaneity, and monologic and dialogic language production. It is through these three variables that context, according to Halliday and Hasan, is realised by lexicogrammatical choice at clause level.

A second approach to the study of context has been developed by Martin (1992). Working within SFL, Martin interprets context as 'two communication planes, genre (context of culture) and register (context of situation), with register functioning as the expression form of genre' (Martin, 1992:495). Martin thus positions the notion of context as being realised by register and genre.

The reason for a divergence between the two approaches and the subtle differences in the use of the terminology is Martin's interest in meanings that are generated across a text and not solely within a clause. Martin explains that the majority of SFL work is on 'clause semantics' (Martin, 2014:7) and as his interest lies in meanings 'beyond the clause' he has developed an alternative perspective on the study of context. This perspective entails a view of register and genre as 'emergently complex patterns of meaning' (p.14), illustrated in Figure 4:



Source Martin (2014:14)
Figure 4 Genre and register as supervenient strata

To articulate how children make meaning in classroom role-play, context illuminates the social goals of the interaction that are realised through the configuration of linguistic and non-linguistic semiotics, at a clause level and the level of the text. This approach is useful as a way of generating descriptions at both clause and discourse semantic levels to show how meaning is created dynamically. While I was initially motivated by Hasan's (1985, 1995, 1996) influential work on context of situation, and work that draws on her conceptualisation (Bowcher, 2007), in this thesis the concepts of register and genre in Sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3, are discussed from Martin's perspective. I take Martin's approach to register and genre because of the existing and continuing work in education and pedagogy (see for example Christie, 2002, Martin and Rose, 2008, Coffin, Acevedo and Lovstedt 2013, Rose, 2014) and the clear link between his notion of register as realising genre which I will now outline.

3.4.2 Register

The realisation of register variables is through lexicogrammatical choice, that is to say language. In what follows, I outline the language resources that are associated with the

register variables of field, tenor and mode (FTM). Field is concerned with the topic or focus of the interaction or activity and the degree of specialisation and is associated with the ideational metafunction. It is realised through language in the choice of participants, processes and circumstances and by the degree of specialist lexis employed. For example, a tea-time discussion about the events of the day will involve (usually) fewer references to specialised lexis compared with, for example, a lecture in a field of science.

Tenor is concerned with how language users position themselves, and build and maintain relationships. The SFL framework posits that in construing tenor, users will employ different structures to exchange meanings thus allowing the speaker to interact with the addressee in a variety of ways. Speech function is the categorisation of utterances (or sentences) by their function in the text, for example, whether the function of the utterance is to request or give information. There are four speech functions, and depending on the function of the utterance in an exchange they are described differently as Table 1 illustrates:

Table 1 Speech functions

Function of utterance	**Initiation**[4]
Giving information	Statement
Requesting information	Question
Giving goods and services	Offer
Demanding goods and services	Command

Adapted from Coffin, Donohue and North.(2009:362)

Examples from the data (BC-EYC3) gathered in this research include:

[4] There are corresponding responses but these have not been explored in this thesis and are therefore not included here.

- The baby has infection [giving information/ statement]

  What's the matter? [requesting information/ question]

  Write that down [demanding goods and services/ command]

Speech function is associated with mood (See Appendix I) in what is described as congruent and non-congruent relationships. For example a statement is congruently realised through a declarative, but a declarative may also be used non-congruently (metaphorically) to realise other speech functions, for example a question. Differences in the way in which speakers employ mood to realise speech function can highlight differences in perceived status and differences in the relationships between language users. Consider the utterance, 'Do you mind seeing what's inside her throat with that?' (BC-EYC3) drawn from the data, the 'nurse' is demanding goods and services (see Table 1). The utterance is a command, yet it is realised by an interrogative signalling a more polite request, perhaps more characteristic of a clinician during a consultation. Non-congruent use of mood is described as interpersonal grammatical metaphor, an 'expansion of meaning potential' (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014:698) and this expansion is, Thompson suggests, strongly associated with spoken language as it:

> tends to be primarily interaction-oriented, concerned with establishing and maintaining relations with other people; and this correlates with a tendency to draw on the resources of interpersonal metaphor, which involve non-congruent ways of enacting interaction (Thompson, 2014:246)

Tenor is further refined by another linguistic system: modality. Modality is often associated with the Appraisal System (Martin and White, 2005). However, the system of Appraisal is not a focus in this particular study. Modality injects degrees of possibility into a written statement or spoken utterance. Thompson describes it as 'a kind of interpersonal 'aura' of the speaker's attitude around the proposition' (Thompson, 2014:70). Modality is split into two categories: modalisation and modulation. The system

of modality is further refined by the simultaneous systems of type, commitment (high, medium and low) and responsibility (for a detailed explanation see Thompson, 2014:77). Modalisation is associated with expressions of certainty or tentativeness and communicates a speaker's assessment of how likely something is to be true, and it applies to the speech function of statements and questions, for example, 'Her needs to stay here for a night' (BC-EYC3). Modulation signals a degree of commitment to a proposal, describes expressions of obligation or inclination and aligns with the speech functions of commands and offers, as in the example, 'You have to pay' (HC-EYC2).

Mode is the register variable aligned with the textual metafunction that links textual language resources such as theme and cohesion with the role of language and the degree of interaction and spontaneity within a text (Coffin et al., 2009). For example, classroom role-play is an informal face to face, highly interactive, spontaneously produced text, and as such will display different features (e.g. repetition) to that of, for example, a planned written formal letter. The role of language is considered highly relevant in classroom role-play interaction to the understanding of when and how language interacts with other semiotic resources to make meaning. The terms 'ancillary' and 'constitutive' describe the role that language has in relation to these other semiotic resources. Within SFL theory and the variable of role of language, the term 'verbal action' denotes written or spoken language, and 'material action' denotes any non-linguistic 'action' that is considered meaningful alongside the language. If language is considered as carrying the totality of the meaning-making, it is defined as constitutive. If it is considered as a part of the meaning-making, it is considered ancillary. It should be noted that these terms are abstract notions positioned on a cline, as opposed to definitive relative realities. In the context of this research, these two terms are used in analysing the relationship between the use of language and the use of props in children's role-play interactions (see Section 4.4.1).

While the primary focus of this research is language, a study of meaning-making in classroom role-play would be restricted were it to ignore the richly resourced and highly interactive environment. Thus the potential of resources other than simply language in contributing to the meaning-making (as I highlighted in Section 2.3.2) will also be considered. The combination of different semiotic resources, for example props, and different channels, for example speech or telephone communication, have been discussed in relation to existing literature in Section 2.3.2. In the discussion above I have drawn attention to the relevance of context in SFL within which more than one semiotic resource may be employed to create meaning.

While it is agreed that language 'is no longer theorized as an isolated phenomenon' (O'Halloran, 2004a:1), the field of multimodality and the way that language and other semiotic resources may be analysed together remains an emerging field of research. Different theoretical perspectives are employed in the study of multimodality (see for example Jewitt, 2009) and very different fields of research may be explored. A multimodal approach has implications for both transcription (Flewitt, Hampel, Hauck and Lancaster 2009) and analysis (Norris, 2004). Frameworks such as SFL theoretically accommodate multimodal contexts, but from an analytical perspective, the operationalisation of the constructs continue to be developed (O'Halloran, 2004b, Bowcher, 2007).

As many interactional factors may be considered as semiotic resources depending on the context, in order to limit the scope in this study, I focus only on props and explore how these assist in the construal of the meaning-making. The reasons for this are that props are particular to the classroom role-plays which I recorded and, as discussed in Chapter 2, acknowledged as important in the literature. Theoretically I link multimodality to the register variable of mode and I discuss in more detail in Section 4.4.1 how I operationalised multimodality to analyse the semiotic resources of the classroom role-

plays within the construct of mode and register. The relevant aspects of field, tenor and mode, are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 Register variables

Register variable	**Description of the register variable**	**Sample description**	**Linguistic features**
Field	The nature of the social activity and the topic, the degree of specialisation	A doctor's consultation	Ideational resources: Participants, circumstances, processes, lexical items
Tenor	The status and social roles of the speakers	A hierarchical relationship between doctor and patient.	Interpersonal resources: Mood, speech function and modality, formality of language and terms of address
Mode	How spontaneous and interactive a text is. Channel, role of language	Face to face interaction, spoken, spontaneous, highly interactive	Textual resources: Theme, Cohesive devices (the textual resources associated with mode have not been analysed in this study)

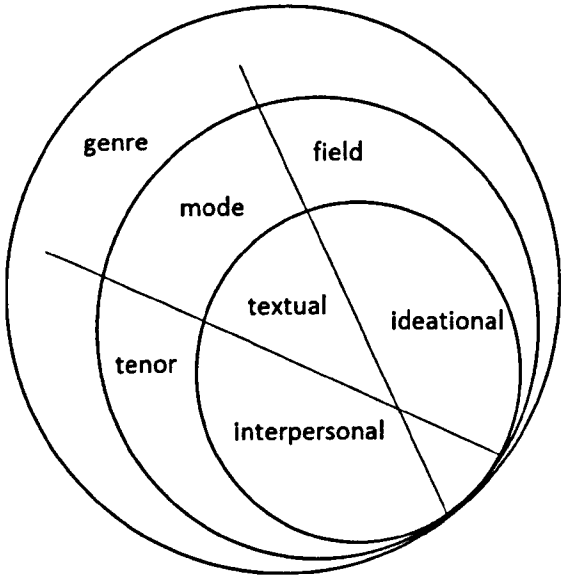
The register variables of FTM, as outlined in Table 2 are thus realised by language choices, and as Martin explains, they work, 'together to achieve a text's goals, where goals are defined in terms of systems of social processes at the level of genre' (Martin, 1992:502-503). The notions of register and genre can thus be understood as indivisible, in particular as genre is described as 'the ways in which field, mode and tenor variables are phased together in a text' (Martin, 1997:12). I now develop the discussion in relation to the construct of genre.

3.4.3 Genre

Genre, in Martin's (1992) terms, is a theoretical construct used to describe a social interaction within which 'stages' are co-constructed by, or between language users in order to achieve certain social goals. Genre, as a higher level conceptualisation and further abstraction is of value in the discussion of classroom role-play as it illuminates the relationship of the clause level description (register) and the longer text. That is to say, meanings in a text can be described in terms of FTM synoptically and using genre as dynamically unfolding towards a social goal.

> One of the reasons for separating genre from field, tenor and mode was to allow for shifts in field, tenor and mode variables from one stage of a genre to another (e.g. being friendly in the beginning of a service encounter and then toughening up to close the sale) (Martin, 2009:12-13)

Each genre has its own configuration of field, tenor and mode and so is therefore a 'pattern of register patterns' (Martin, 1992:505). Figure 5 illustrates this point.



Source Martin and Rose (2008:17)
Figure 5 A 'pattern of register patterns'

The value of this genre approach is the ability to analyse the language at a detailed lexicogrammatical level and to be able to theoretically link the unfolding interaction to those linguistic choices.

A genre is named and described through stages which are particular to that genre. Each stage can be described in terms of the register variables (discussed above), and the progression from one stage to another is characterised by some shift in the way in which the register variables are realised. Notation is used to provide details of the typical order of the stages, recursion and whether stages are obligatory or optional, for example:

Orientation^ Record of events^ (Reorientation)

^ denotes 'followed by'

( ) denotes an optional stage

An example of a 'personal recount' genre for illustrative purposes is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Stages and lexicogrammatical features of a personal recount genre

Genre	Social purpose	Generic stages	Lexicogrammatical features
Personal recount	To retell a sequence of events in the writer/ speaker's life	Orientation Record of events (Reorientation)	Past tense Declarative mood Time circumstances Personal pronoun 'I'

Adapted from Coffin and Donohue (2014:51)

SFL research into literacy and learning at primary school level in the 1980s led to the identification of a number of written genres. This work inspired further research at tertiary level into how students in different disciplines use these genres to accommodate the requirements of their fields (Coffin and Donohue, 2014). The work has inspired significant and influential educational focused work on written genres and has been persuasive particularly in the pedagogical contexts of Australia and the UK (See Coffin (2006) for a discussion of genre families at primary and secondary school level. For the identification of 13 genre families at tertiary level see Gardner and Nesi (2013)). Martin (2009:19) notes 'the use of genre theory to design new genres (i.e. new teaching practices)', and thus by implication substantiates the use of genre theory in various educational contexts.

Martin's notion of genre, builds on Hasan's (1984, 1985) work on genre (or generic structure potential). Hasan's early work was developed following her analysis of a face to face spoken sales encounter, where she identified obligatory and optional elements of the text where an element is defined as 'a stage with some consequence in the progression of a text' (Hasan, 1985:56). Drawing on Hasan's (1985) work on the sales encounter, empirical research on genre in spoken social interactions has been carried out in service encounters (Ventola, 1987), doctor-patient interactions (Tebble, 1999), and more recently call centre interactions (Forey and Lockwood, 2007, Xu, Wang, Forey and Li 2010). Although these research contexts are very different to the classroom environment, they demonstrate the value of applying genre to understand spoken interactions which are

complex and often more unpredictable than written texts. The potential unpredictability, and complexity of spoken interaction may result in genres within genres; for example elemental genres may be embedded as a stage in a longer text and may also combine to create macrogenres (Martin and Rose, 2008). The identification of generic stages in a range of spoken language contexts, in particular where findings have been used to highlight problems in communication (Tebble, 1999, 2013, Forey and Lockwood, 2007, Xu et al., 2010), validates its potential in the context of classroom role-play. Genre is highly relevant for this study enabling an abstract language description and a link to the educational context within which the texts are produced. As discussed in Chapter 2, the identification of new oral genres as a result of language research, for example Hoyte et al. (2014) illustrates how new genres can be identified in children's oral texts.

3.4.4 Section Summary

In this section I have presented the relevant constructs from SFL theory relevant to this thesis. A focus on context of situation, register and genre provide a basis for the analytical framework that I will discuss in Chapter 4. I now bring together the discussions of SFL and Vygotskian theories to explicate the rational for combining the two theories and their related concepts, as I do in this doctoral work.

3.5 A conceptual framework combining Systemic Functional Linguistics and sociocultural theories of language and learning

Salient aspects of the complementary Vygotskian and Hallidayan theories have been noted already in this chapter, and I now draw these points together to justify my approach to the study of classroom role-play using these two frameworks. In addition, I highlight

other research that has also applied a Vygotskian and Hallidayan blended framework to educational contexts.

Both Hallidayan and Vygotskian frameworks place language, and more importantly, dialogic interaction and semiotic mediation, at their centre as noted earlier. This important point highlights one aspect of their complementarity. In Halliday's theory of learning (Halliday, 1993), language and learning are foregrounded as a 'semiotic process: learning **is learning how to mean**' (Halliday, 1993:113 bold in the original). Vygotsky's theoretical approach, as Hasan states, 'derives from the very concept of semiotic mediation ...it foregrounds a fundamental relationship between mental functions and discourse within the context of social/ cultural activity' (Hasan, 2003:194). This fundamental starting point explains why the combination of the two theories is appropriate for a study of language in the context of role-play where the activity is a spontaneous dialogic interaction within the learning environment of the classroom. I draw on the Vygotskian notion of the ZPD while using the grammatical framework of SFL to articulate how opportunities for learning are being presented linguistically.

While emerging from different fields, both theories have been successfully applied to the field of education, as Coffin and Donohue (2014:24) state:

> Throughout SFL research into language in school education, researchers have looked toward the Vygotskian notion of semiotic mediation in order to make sense of the teaching and learning processes.

Research on teaching and learning that has drawn on SFL and Vygotsky includes Wells' (1999, 2007) longitudinal study into learning in the classroom. In an educational group activity, the research identified moments where the students' ZPD was extended through adult to child and child to child interactions. While Wells uses the language interaction as evidence of the ZPD extension (as I will do in my study), in contrast to my own approach,

the actual grammatical structures are not the focus of Wells' work. Furthermore, the focus of his research is centred on a particular group activity and not a more open activity such as classroom role-play.

Schleppegrell's research investigated 'the challenges for students whose socialization has not prepared them to participate fully in the school context' (Schleppegrell, 2004:23). Drawing on Vygotsky to highlight the perspective on the role language plays in the development of social and cognitive processes, Schleppegrell uses SFL as a linguistic approach to explaining these processes: 'the structuring of new kinds of knowledge depends on the new ways of using language' (Schleppegrell, 2004:23).

Another Vygotskian and SFL blended study is the work of Gibbons (2006) on learning in an ESL (English as a second language) classroom. She suggests that 'SFL is both compatible with, and complementary to the sociocultural views of learning and of the significance of interaction in the educational process' (Gibbons, 2006:40). Her research aims to understand how the sociocultural constructs of scaffolding is represented linguistically. Gibbons' work demonstrates the possibility of using an SFL linguistic description to explain the learning processes of the ZPD. Her work is highly relevant to this research as I explain in Section 4.4.3, but in contrast to my own study, does not focus in detail on the linguistic structures that comprise the IRF structures she highlights.

As Wells (1999) highlights, Vygotsky does not focus on the role of semiotic mediation in instantiating culture, but this aspect of semiotic mediation is developed by Halliday and colleagues in the work in SFL on register and genre. While Vygotsky's focus was on the meaning of the word, he did not take into account the longer text nor the role of context (Hasan 2003:146-147) which is more explicitly theorised in SFL. The SFL and Vygotskian blended framework aligns the two research questions to the same theoretical framework

and provides a coherent sociocultural theoretical foundation on which this complete thesis is based.

The selection of the theoretical framework

I have justified the selection of SFL, enriched with the Vygotskian notion of the ZPD to the specific focus in this study of children's meaning-making in classroom role-play. While a Vygotskian and Hallidayan blended framework in my view is the most appropriate for the research under discussion in this thesis, there are other approaches to the study of language that could also have been productively employed. I outline two particular frameworks that fall within the broad spectrum of approaches under the banner of discourse analysis: Politeness Theory (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and Conversational analysis (Sachs, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974). I also reflect briefly on Linguistic Ethnography (Rampton, Tusting, Maybin, Barewell, Creese and Lytra 2004). I draw attention to the relative strengths and weaknesses of the frameworks in relation specifically to the research questions and aims of this study. While this selection of potential approaches to the study of language is far from exhaustive, it serves to draw attention to some of the reasons why SFL is, in my view, particularly appropriate in this context and for these research questions.

Politeness theory (Brown and Levinson, 1987) is concerned with how interactants make language choices to preserve 'face'. Goffman's notion of face was taken up by Brown and Levinson and developed into a theory that posits that in an interaction a speaker will make positive politeness strategies (such as appreciation) and avoid negative politeness strategies (such as confrontation). The language that a speaker uses, they suggest, highlights differences in social distance, power relations and degree of imposition. This framework is ideally suited to spoken interactions, and to a certain degree aligns with the tenor variable of register (discussed in Section 3.4.2). I acknowledge that the framework

would have highlighted some interesting results in the consideration of for example the doctors' language compared to that of the parent. However, the framework is focussed solely on the interpersonal perspective, and does not focus on how the field is built, nor how different semiotic resources work together with language. It is an interest in how these three aspects blend to create meaning, reflected in the research questions, that positions SFL as a framework more suited to the study in this instance.

Conversational analysis (CA) (Sacks et al., 1974) pays close attention to the delicate features of an interaction such as pauses, overlaps between speakers, turn taking, and intonation. Typically, due to the in-depth nature of the transcription small amounts of data are used to highlight linguistic features. For this study, and as far as possible within the scope, I wanted to be able to draw findings from a larger data set across different scenarios and make connections across different texts. CA, while providing interesting findings at the level of the interaction does not take into account the context in which the event is produced. I am interested in the way in which language and context, described as 'happening together' (Butt and Wegener, 2007:592) occur in role-play and therefore the research questions thus align more strongly with SFL as a framework.

Linguistic Ethnography (Rampton et al., 2004) is an approach to language that draws on ethnographic methods and questions that consider the relationship between language and social practices drawing on social theorists such as Bakhtin, Bourdieu, Foucault (Tusting and Maybin, 2007). As I will discuss in more detail in Section 4.4, my main focus of analysis was the children's language and other semiotic choices. To support this analysis, I did not rely solely on text as the only form of data collection, and as I will discuss in Section 4.2.6, I conducted two interviews, and through my presence in the classroom and in watching the video recordings, I also 'observed' the children's role-play, data collection methods that fall within the repertoire of ethnographic methods. However, the observations and interviews are considered to support the broader understanding of

classroom role-play, rather than integral to the analytic phase which was focused on the texts produced. The research questions guiding this research concerned language at the level of the text and in lesser detail the social practices concerning the production of the language. I acknowledge that a more comprehensive consideration of the practices surrounding the role-play would have contributed significantly to the study and I return to this point in Chapter 8.

As I outlined in Chapter 1, this research was driven by an idea around the particular language choices of a five year old playing a vet and a curiosity about the language choices he had made that had enabled these new meanings. This observation and curiosity about language motivated the research questions which in turn motivated the choice of theoretical and analytical framework (I discuss the analytical framework in more detail in Section 4.3 and 4.4). An additional motivating factor in selecting this framework was the successful application of an SFL and Vygotskian framework to children's language data in the pilot study (Mukherjee, 2012).

Limitations to the analytical framework that I have selected are captured in a critical review of SFL by van Dijk (2008). For instance, he draws attention to the notion of context in SFL (a key notion in this study), which he suggests is problematic as the potential influence of cognition and social theories are largely ignored in the development and use of the abstract term. As the focus of this PhD study is primarily on linguistic theory that may contribute to our understanding of children's meaning-making van Dijk's criticism is noted but not considered a limitation in this study. Furthermore I draw on Vygotsky's cognitive theory of development to assist in the discussion of learning (as discussed in Section 3.2). Van Dijk also highlights 'too much linguistic ("lexico-syntactic") sentence grammar' (van Dijk, 2008:29) in the SFL framework. However, it is precisely the sentence grammar level choices that were of interest in this study, and therefore, while it may be a limitation in one study, in this doctoral work, it was one the reasons for the selection of

SFL. Another main criticism appears to be that, in van Dijk's view, the key constructs within SFL, such as field, tenor and mode, are not defined precisely, and have developed little since Halliday's early adoption of the notions from earlier work by Spencer, Gregory, Ellis and Pearce (van Dijk, 2008). He argues that SFL researchers and theorists are not critical enough of the theory and hence little development and refinement of these key notions has been made. In challenge, I suggest that there is development and debate within the SFL community, for example over the 'sysfling' (sysfling@cardiff.ac.uk) and 'sys-func' (sys-func@listserv.uts.edu.ac) email communities, at conferences (see for example Bartlett, 2013), and in recent work (see for example Fontaine et al., 2013, Bowcher, 2014, Hasan, 2014, Martin, 2014). Furthermore I suggest that imprecise definitions of constructs are a reflection of the developments he considers missing, as researchers apply theoretical abstractions to empirical research contexts, and thereby develop and refine concepts. Furthermore in a sense, the imprecision that van Dijk criticises ultimately reflects language and context as highly complex and interwoven notions, and he concedes:

> Even without a theoretically more up-to-date concept of context, much of this systematic work on language and discourse structure, and on the relations between text and context, remains relevant today. (van Dijk, 2008:55)

3.6 Chapter 3 Conclusions

The literature discussed in Chapter 2 strongly suggests that meaning-making in classroom role-play is an important area of investigation. The rich engaging environment with opportunities to interact through speech and other semiotic resources necessitates a theoretical positioning and framework that can account for the delicate language choices involved in meaning-making, and identify and explicate moments of learning foregrounding language. In this chapter, I have discussed how the combined theoretical

frameworks of Halliday and Vygotsky can provide insights into classroom role-play through the children's interaction by foregrounding the significance of the inextricable links between sociocultural interaction, language and learning.

The use and description of register and genre within SFL provides a theoretical basis to analyse meaning-making across the metafunctional aspects of language through close attention to the ideational, interpersonal and textual aspects of the language choices. As outlined, this approach has the potential to facilitate a detailed description of meaning-making and extends the potential of the term register contrasting with previously more narrow uses in other research and more general descriptions of the type of 'speech style' (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004). Furthermore, register, from within SFL, allows a description of the non-linguistic semiotics that contribute to the linguistic interaction, context and meaning-making.

I have discussed that while Vygotsky's work is pervasive in educational contexts and it provides a useful theoretical construct in the ZPD, through which learning opportunities may be identified, the work implies that young children's interaction in classroom role-play will not produce 'educational' or 'scientific' knowledge in the way defined by Vygotsky. However, I will argue that the language found in classroom role-play may provide some early foundations of expression that form the basis of some areas of educational knowledge, thereby linking classroom role-play more firmly to a child's longer term academic as well as social success.

I have suggested that a more delicate conceptualisation of learning must be applied to classroom role-play in order to draw out opportunities for learning. Furthermore, the child to child interaction should be examined for the opportunities that the children present themselves. While the notions of scaffolding and visible and invisible mediation can be usefully applied theoretically to highlight teaching and learning in different educational

contexts, it appears that the focus in relation to both these constructs has tended towards teacher behaviour, and therefore teaching, and less attention has been paid to learning and in particular the role of children in their own learning. Furthermore, the study of scaffolding has been focused less on more open ended tasks such as classroom role-play. As a result I draw on the two constructs of scaffolding and mediation, to propose, in Chapter 4, a new conceptualisation of learning that foregrounds an interactional approach where learning is mediated through language between teacher-class in the teacher introductions and child-child in the children's role-plays.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the data collection, and my approach to ethics and transcription. I will also explain specifically how the SFL and ZPD constructs have been operationalised in the analysis of the children's meaning-making, and explain my approach to the exploration of learning opportunities in classroom role-play.

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4 The data collection and analytical framework

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3 I outlined the theoretical framework for this study which draws on constructs from Vygotskian learning theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). I discussed how these two theories are compatible and have been employed together where researchers have sought to investigate the centrality of language in teaching and learning in both informal (i.e. the home) and formal (i.e. the classroom) contexts. I explained how I will combine these two frameworks to articulate how children create meaning in classroom role-play and what opportunities for learning this activity presents. I begin by setting my work within the context of research methodology.

Researchers working with the SFL tradition study 'actual instances of language that have been used (or are being used) by speakers or writers' (Bloor and Bloor, 2004:5). This empirical doctoral work will present frequencies of instances of particular language choices (as I discuss in more detail in Sections 4.3 and 4.4), yet it is foremost a qualitative linguistic enquiry involving children within their natural settings (cf. Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). I do not present this work as a quantitative study, wishing to comment, like Torr (2000:142) in her SFL based classroom study, on 'patterns of meaning in the classroom, not simply on the frequency of certain linguistic forms'. As a result I do not present measures of statistical significance, but I explore the frequencies and the patterns of language choices they reveal in more depth through the qualitative discussion. In all empirical research, questions concerning internal and external validity are important. Internal validity is whether the same conclusions might be drawn if the data were reanalysed by another researcher (Nunan, 1992), or twice by the same researcher. This study seeks to provide internal validity through employing the systematic analytical

framework of SFL and using an existing analytical framework for the analysis in RQ1. In addition, in relation to RQ1, the coding was carried out over a period of 6 months and the coding was reviewed as new additional aspects of coding were carried out (I discuss the way in which the coding was carried out in Section 4.4). Furthermore coding was discussed regularly with my doctoral supervisory team to improve the reliability. A new analytical framework has been conceptualised for RQ2 (Section 4.4.3), and I attempt to provide further internal validity through the detailed discussion of the operationalising of concepts in Section 4.4. Again this framework and the coding were discussed regularly with my supervisory team.

External validity is said to be present if a study can be replicated with the same conclusions. My research design is replicable in other Early Years classrooms, the question as to whether the same conclusions might be drawn is dependent on a range of contextual factors such as the socio-economic catchment of the school, the sample of the children participating, and the time point within the academic year. External validity influences the generalisability of a study. I acknowledge that a small scale study of this type may limit the generalisable claims I can make, yet, in defence of this approach I draw on an observation made by Painter (1999a:137) of her single child study:

> ...taking the theoretical perspective that language is a social and not an individual or even simply inter-individual process, it can be predicted that the broad patterns of Stephen's language use are likely to be similar to those of other middle-class children learning English as their mother tongue

The empirical work presented in this thesis draws on other studies of children's language and play, yet differs methodologically in some significant ways. Firstly, it contrasts with Halliday (1975), Painter (1999a) and Torr (1997) and their focus on meaning-making between child and adult. My approach takes peer-led interaction within small groups of children thus exploring symmetrical (child to child) rather than asymmetrical relationships

(adult to child). It contrasts also with children's language research by Sachs and Devine (1976) and Gordon (2002) whose data collection of children's language was carried out in the home and recorded by the children's mothers. My study, based in an Early Years classroom, reflects broadly typical role-play interactions that occur in Early Years classrooms across England. Other research designs include quasi-experimental work, for example Sachs et al. (1985), where children were observed covertly by researchers in a 'filming room'. My approach was not to record the children covertly and this is discussed in more detail as part of my approach to ethical considerations in Section 4.2.3. As I will outline, the recording devices were visible to the children at all times. My research design aligns with work carried out by Martin and Dombey (2002) on language and play in the school's designated role-play area, and by Kyratzis (2007) and Löfdahl (2005) on children's language and play. In these studies recordings were made in school in a naturalistic environment capturing spontaneous language. However in each of these studies there is a single social scenario captured while in my work I consider five different types of social encounter detailed in Section 4.2.

I will outline the methodological approach to the data collection in Section 4.2, and my approach to the linguistic analysis of the data in Section 4.3. The operationalisation of the constructs discussed in Chapter 3 will be explained in Section 4.4.

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Data collection site

A co-educational state first school was selected for the data collection within the spring and summer terms of 2013. The selection of the school was based on an existing relationship with the staff. In the academic year of 2010-2011, I volunteered in one of the

Reception Classes (4-5 years) supporting the early reading programme, and in 2011-2012 I selected the same school for my Master of Research (Mukherjee, 2012), empirical work referred to as the pilot study. The pilot explored two groups of three 4-5 year old children engaged in classroom role-play in a 'baby clinic' scenario. The aim was to identify ways in which children created meaning, and opportunities for learning that might be said to be present in their interactions. The Head of Early Years (also a class teacher) and the second class teacher in Early Years both have an active interest in role-play and so were happy to accommodate the additional more extensive research for the doctoral study.

The school is in an ethnically mixed area in the South East of England. The 2013 school cohort was made up of an intake of 70 children from white or white mixed with another heritage families (for example mixed white and Asian), and 108 children from families with other heritages, for example, Asian (2012-2013 figures provided by the school). The school had 62% of children with English as a first language overall. In the two Reception Classes (Early Years) there were 60 children, of whom 21 had another language spoken at home but only six received English as an Additional Language (EAL) support. None of the children with EAL support were participants in the study as my focus is children who speak English fluently either as their mother tongue or alongside another language spoken at home. While the socioeconomic status of the school was not a relevant factor in this research, it is important to give a sense of the status of the participating school. The percentage of free school meals is considered a measure to describe the socioeconomic status of a school. In the participating school for this doctoral work, 6.7% of all children in the year received free school meals (Department for Education, 2013a) which is below the wider council average of 14.9% (Department for Education, 2013b), and below the national average which is 15.2% (Department for Education, 2015).

4.2.2 Video as method

Video as a data collection method has been proven as a fruitful way of capturing children's peer interactions (e.g. Flewitt, 2006, Kyratzis, 2007). In relation to this study in particular, video recordings enabled the capture of naturally occurring spontaneous language and the play interaction necessary for the level of analysis required. Three recording devices were used during the data collection. As shown in Figure 6, one video camera was mounted on a tripod in the corner of the role-play area. One small video recorder was positioned in the opposite corner with a remote microphone located in the middle of the area and an audio recorder was also located in the role-play area (this figure is not to scale).

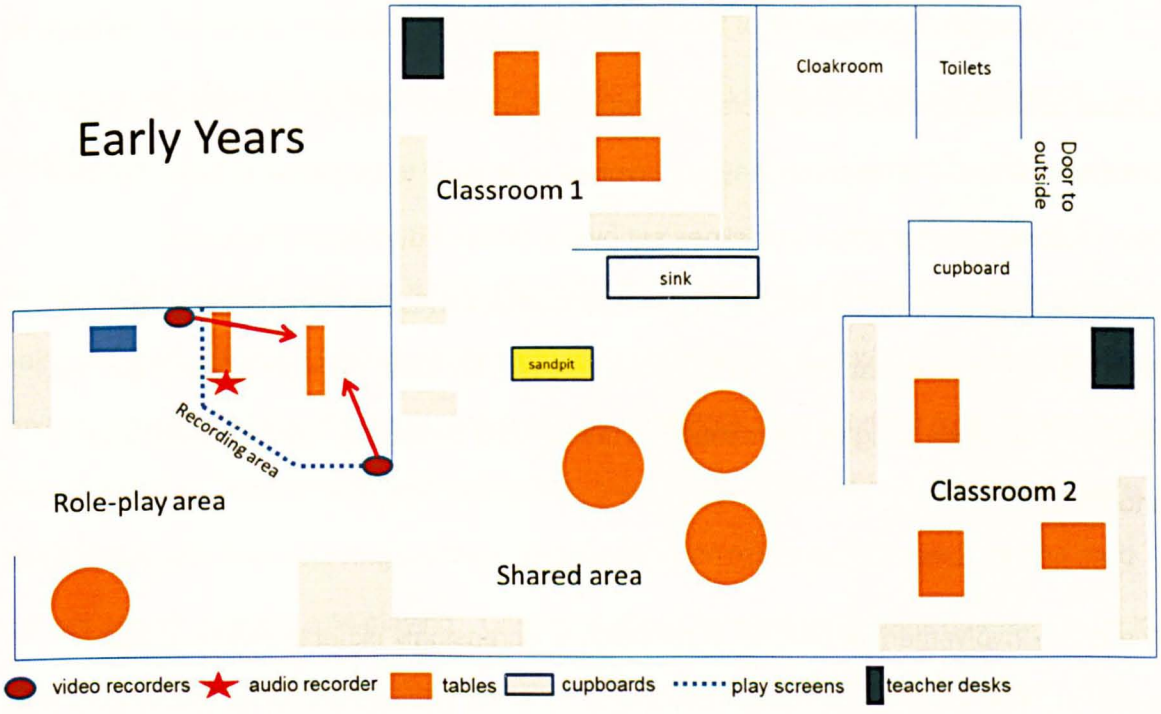

Figure 6 Early Years Classroom area

Three recording devices in one small area might be might considered unnecessary, but I found in the pilot study that there were several factors affecting the audibility of the children's language and therefore the subsequent transcription. For example, audibility was at times hampered by noise carried from other parts of the EY area. The area is open-plan and noise from the adjoining classrooms carried into the role-play. In addition,

the children often spoke softly as they moved about in the role-play area and sometimes outside the play screens that frame the role-play area (one of these play screens can be seen in the photograph in Figure 7). While the majority of the transcriptions were carried out from data from the main video recorder, certain utterances were difficult to capture in their entirety with a single device. Using the audio recorder, in addition to the video camera and recorder, allowed me to check utterances against a second and third recording when required. For the audio-recordings of the teacher introductions, the teacher and class sat in the wider role-play area looking towards the recording area (as it is highlighted in Figure 6).

4.2.3 Ethics

Ethical considerations are particularly important in research with young children whose understanding of the research they are involved in is likely to be partial at best. I outline how I followed best practice guidelines set by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011) and the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL, 2012), drawing particular attention to my approach to consent, the right to withdraw, the children's understanding of the research process, data protection, confidentiality and anonymity.

The active involvement of children in research is increasingly expected within social research. This expectation stems from Article 12 of the UN convention on the rights of the child (United Nations 1989 cited in BERA, 2011:6), which states that children have the right 'to express their views on all matters that affect them' (United Nations 1989 cited in Flewitt, 2005:555), and is reflected in the BERA and BAAL guidelines. Children not only have the right to consent and be informed about research that they may participate in, but also the right to decline to participate in, or withdraw from a research study (BAAL, 2012).

The notion of 'informed consent' is discussed widely in the educational research literature (for example: Burgess, 1989, Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, Flewitt, 2005, Christians, 2011, Robson, 2011). Flewitt (2005) notes that the term 'informed' with children is problematic because the nature of a research project may not be fully understood by a child of 4-5 years. Flewitt suggests 'provisional consent' may be a term more appropriate for young children and defines it as an agreement:

> ...understood to be provisional upon the research being conducted within a negotiated, broadly outlined framework and continuing to develop within the participants' expectations (Flewitt, 2005:556)

Provisional consent is a step towards a greater appreciation of the complexity of consent as a notion. However, I would suggest it remains difficult to achieve and ultimately requires a sensitive and responsible approach to the data collection and the research participants.

As part of the consent process, it was important to me that the children knew they were being videoed, although I acknowledge that their understanding of what this meant was limited. I monitored the children's non-linguistic behaviour when I talked to them about the project and their involvement, and during the role-plays to reassure myself that they were comfortable with the recording process. One group was reformed in week 2 as one child did not appear to enjoy role-playing. Concerns about consent have particular relevance in classroom research where children are used to complying with a teacher's request. The work of Aubrey, David, Godfrey and Thompson on ethical and methodological issues highlights that research with young children '...probably requires more sensitivity to the power relations than most' (2000:164). Although I asked the children to address me by my first name in an attempt to remove some of the formality of my presence, I was, as an adult in the classroom, not unlike a 'teacher'. My aim at all times in the classroom was to

prioritise the children over and above any research requirements as, '...the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration' (BERA, 2011:6).

Legally children are not able to provide consent to be participants in research until the age of 16. Therefore, as the participants in this research were 4-5 years, it was necessary to disseminate the research aims to a hierarchy of gatekeepers in order to gain legal consent, including the Head teacher, the class teachers and the parents before speaking to the children. With this in mind I prepared an information sheet with relevant information about the study for the potential participants' parents (see Appendix IV and V for the information and consent forms distributed to parents). To supplement this, and for any specific queries I made myself available at two separate 'pick up times' to meet parents, discuss the research and answer questions. In addition I returned to the school at a later date to ensure that parents understood how the outputs from the research (the thesis and presentations) would be disseminated.

To protect the children's anonymity, the name of the school is omitted from this thesis, and the children's and teachers' names are replaced with pseudonyms. The data have been treated as confidential and are held in a secure area on the Open University network. All non-digital data are held in a locked cupboard at the Open University. The study was agreed by The Open University (OU) Ethics Committee in January 2013 (Appendix III), and in compliance with the Data Protection Act this research has been registered with the Open University data protection management system. At the time of the study I held a Criminal Records Enhanced Disclosure[5] (see Appendix VI).

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[5] Since the data collection, the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has been replaced by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about

4.2.4 The organisation of the data collection

Parental consent (discussed above in Section 4.2.3) was gained for 46 (of a possible 60) children to participate in the study. From this group, six mixed groups of three children were selected by the teachers. Mixed groups were chosen as the influence of gender was not a focus of this study. The reason for choosing three children was that in the pilot I found that a group of three children was more likely to interact together as a group, than a group of four, which tended to split into two pairs. The six groups were coded as Table 4 below shows. The acronyms EYC and EYM differentiate the two classes and refer to the two Early Years teachers' names (as pseudonyms): Early Years Cook and Early Years Masters (the children's names here are pseudonyms and this point is discussed further in Section 4.2.7).

Table 4 Class, group code and children's pseudonyms

Class	Group Code	Children's pseudonyms
1	EYC1	Imogen, Paige, Jake
1	EYC2	Alex, Isla-Rose, Alfie
1	EYC3	Daniel, Yusra, Meggie
2	EYM1	Nicole, Phillip, Ryan
2	EYM2	Rory, Lucy, Rosie
2	EYM3	Jasmine, Melissa, Ishaan

4.2.5 The role-play routine

Role-play was already part of the usual morning routine for the two Early Years classes with which I worked. During a typical school morning, six groups of eight children (four from each class) would have an opportunity to role-play. These sessions lasted around 10 minutes and the play was loosely guided by a teacher introduction, and located in a

designated role-play area. The teachers introduced each social scenario to all their classes by assembling them in the role-play area and discussing the type of scenario, introducing key vocabulary and roles, and sometimes modelling a short example of a role-play. Every two weeks the scenario of the role-play area was changed. By 'scenario' I mean the type of social encounter set by the school, for example shoe shop or cafe.

The Early Years planned scenarios ranged from life-like (for example, shops, cafes) to 'fantasy' (for example, dinosaur land, teddy bears' picnic). As I was particularly interested in how children construed life-like social scenarios in classroom role-play, five life-like scenarios were chosen from the existing Early Years' planning for the data collection. These themes are typical of the role-play scenarios found in Reception Classes across England (Rogers and Evans, 2008):

- The Baby Clinic
- The Healthy Cafe (Cafe)
- The Pet Shop
- The Veterinary Surgery (Vet's)
- The Shoe Shop

The data collection ran between the 18th March and the 14th June 2013. Each role-play scenario ran for two weeks (as it would in the normal school routine) and in the first week of each new scenario I audio-recorded the teacher introductions. I recorded the role-plays for two mornings a week, so that children not participating in the research were able to use the role-play area for the other three days. For both weeks of each scenario, I audio and video recorded the children on Wednesday and Friday mornings. These two particular mornings were chosen for the practical reason that there was only one class in the EY area (with the other class engaged in an activity outside the EY area, for example 'Forest Schools'), and with only one class, the background noise on the recordings was reduced

thereby improving the audibility of the language for transcription. Table 5 shows an example of a two-weekly pattern of the data collection.

Table 5 Example two week data collection schedule

Scenario	Week	Dates	Activity
Cafe	3	Mon 15th April	Audio record Class 1 teacher introduction (EYC)
		Tues 16th April	Audio record Class 2 teacher introduction (EYM)
		Wed 17th April	Audio and video record Class 1 groups in role-play
		Fri 19th April	Audio and video record Class 2 groups in role-play
	4	Wed 24th April	Audio and video record Class 2 groups in role-play
		Fri 26th April	Audio and video record Class 1 groups in role-play

The photograph in Figure 7 shows three of the children role-playing in the baby clinic. I have permission to use images of the children participating in the study in this thesis. See Appendix V for the consent form.

Figure 7 Photograph of three children role-playing in the baby clinic

The photograph illustrates the space in which the children played, the sort of props and play equipment that the area was furnished with, and the dressing up clothes. The props were changed to reflect the different scenarios, and the range of props is illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6 Props provided in the different scenarios

Scenario	Props
Baby Clinic	Phone, computer, clipboard, pencils and paper, doll, buggy, scales, doctor/ nurse's kit with stethoscope, thermometer, measuring tape, bandage, dressing up clothes baby high-chair
Vet's	Phone, computer, clipboard, pencils and paper, toy animals, scales, vet's kit with stethoscope, thermometer, measuring tape, bandage, dressing up clothes
Cafe	Menu, till (with attached tannoy), phone, plastic food, plates, cutlery, mixing bowls, clipboard pencils and paper, dressing up clothes, dolls, buggy, baby high-chair
Pet shop	Till (with attached tannoy), toy animals with price labels, animal leads, pet carriers
Shoe shop	Shoes, foot measure, till (with attached tannoy)

4.2.6 The data sets

The primary data sets for this study are that of the video recordings of the children during role-play and the audio recorded teacher introductions. These primary sets are supplemented by other data that support the findings contextually but were not analysed. The supporting data include some of the written material produced by the children during the role-plays (for example, an order in the cafe), photographs and two teacher interviews, as summarised in Table 7.

Table 7 Overview of data sets and supporting data

Collected data	Analysed data	Rationale
Video recordings	Transcriptions	To enable close linguistic analysis of peer interactions in the role-play
Audio recordings	Transcriptions	To investigate how the role-plays were introduced by the teachers and the children's subsequent role-play interactions.
Supporting data		
Photos		'Stills' were captured automatically by the video-recorder and are used for illustrative purposes only
Children's Writing		To explore instances of 'writing' as integral parts of the construction of the role-plays
Teacher interviews		To understand the teachers' views on the benefits of role-plays.

I will discuss in detail the way in which the core data were selected in Section 4.3.1. In terms of the supporting data, I have used one photograph for illustrative purposes to show the children engaged in the role-play area using the props in this thesis (Figure 7). I provide three examples of the children's writing (Figure 12, Figure 14 and Figure 17). Finally, the aim of the teacher interviews was to elicit the teachers' views of the value of role-play, particularly in light of the 'tension' between policy and play I report in the literature review, and I make reference to the interviews in Chapter 7.

4.2.7 Researcher and participant roles

The aim that children should act as research participants rather than as research subjects was discussed in Section 4.2.3. One of the ways in which the children were able to participate in my research was by switching on and off the recording devices at the

beginning and end of each role-play session and choosing where to place the audio recorder and remote microphone. The video recorders, as suggested in Figure 6, were visible to the children in the role-play area. From some utterances in the transcriptions, I know that the children understood (in as far as possible for their age) the purpose of the recording devices as illustrated by these two excerpts from the data:

> There's one [recording device] there...she's [the researcher] put it there...she has recorded our voices (EYM1)

> ...that girl she hear what we talk (EYM3)

On occasions, the children became distracted by the video recorder and stopped role-playing. They would at times explore the equipment by looking through the video-recorder viewer to see their peers as illustrated by the extract here from group EYC2 engaged in a pet shop role-play:

Rory:	I can see you. I can see you
Lucy:	I want to have a go
Rory:	Oh, there's a little square in your mouth and there's a red light.
Lucy:	I want a go. Can I see Rory now? There is a square on your face. I can see the dog.
Rory:	Move out of the way Rosie
Rosie:	Now can I have a look

While there were moments where the video equipment distracted the children from the role-plays, they were not distracted for long, and the presence of the equipment did not appear to influence the spontaneity and naturalness of their language.

The other aspect of the research process in which I involved the children was in the choosing of their pseudonyms. It is usual for a researcher to choose ethnically sensitive

pseudonyms. However, given the potential complexity of an individual's ethnicity, I was not confident of choosing a suitable 'ethnically sensitive' pseudonym. I therefore decided to ask the children to choose their own pseudonym (shown earlier in Table 4). The children enjoyed choosing their own names, often discussing options with their peers and changing their minds. Thus the names captured in the study (other than two who were absent at the end of the study) are those chosen by the children themselves and are not always 'ethnically' specific.

My own role in the research process is not easily defined as either participant or non-participant observer for reasons that I will outline now. To avoid affecting the spontaneity of the children's peer language I did not want to participate in the role-plays. In order to avoid being drawn into the children's group interaction I decided to leave the role-play area once the video and audio recorders were set to record at the beginning of each new group. I did check on the progression of the role-plays to ensure that there were no problems with the children or with the technology, and at times I was asked to help with locating something relevant or to settle disputes between the children. Therefore, although I was present in the classroom and observed some parts of the role-plays, the unfolding of each individual group's complete interaction was new to me at the time of listening to the recordings.

4.3 Analytic approach

4.3.1 Selection of data

My initial video-recording schedule had to accommodate the reality of school life. Disruptions that could not have been anticipated at the beginning of the data collection such as children being absent and school commitments during recording time (such as

school photographs) prevented some recordings from taking place. In addition, there were some recordings that were unusable due to technical problems such as battery failure, or interference by the children, i.e. turning off the remote microphone. From the final possible selection, I watched and made notes broadly categorising the recordings as summarised in Table 8.

Table 8 Categorisation of recordings

Categorisation of the recordings	**Number of recordings**
Children role-playing	26
Children playing but not role-playing (within scenario theme)	7
Children playing but not role-playing (outside scenario theme)	3
Children neither role-playing nor playing	6
Technical difficulties	4

I discounted from the selection role-plays where the children did not engage in role-play, as broadly defined by Fein (1981) (see Section 2.2). While I acknowledge that these recordings would also provide very rich and interesting data, for the purposes of this study and my research questions I wanted to include in the corpus as much language as possible where the children were speaking as an imagined role. I use the term 'corpus' to mean a 'body' of data (Swann et al., 2004:57), and not a reference to 'corpus analysis' which is a specific approach to data analysis and is not used in this study (for a broad definition of corpus analysis see Swann et al., 2004:57-58). For the analysis therefore, I selected 15 video recordings (of a possible 26 recordings) of three groups in each of the five scenarios, based on those where the children adopted imaginary roles and constructed imaginary scenarios in order to address RQ1. I decided to take recordings from Week 1 to provide a more comparable set of recordings in relation to the teacher introductions for RQ2. While some groups are represented more often than others, for example EYM1 was selected four times, whereas EYM2 was selected only once (as Table

9 shows), my intention is not to assess or compare individual children, but to get a broad view of how these scenarios are taken up by a particular age group with children who have English as a first language, or English spoken alongside another language at home.

Table 9 Groups selected by scenario

Scenario	**Groups selected**		
Baby Clinic	EYC3	EYM1	EYM3
Cafe	EYC2	EYC3	EYM1
Pet shop	EYM1	EYM2	EYM3
Vet's	EYC1	EYC2	EYM1
Shoe shop	EYC1	EYC2	EYC3

The analysis for RQ1 draws on a corpus of data of children's role-play of almost 18,000 words (almost 4 hours). The analysis for RQ2 draws on a corpus of teacher introductions of almost 20,000 words (also almost 4 hours). Appendix VII shows the breakdown of minutes of each recording and word count of each transcription for every group role-play and each teacher introduction.

4.3.2 Transcription

In this study where audio and videos have been made of 4-5 year old children while they role-play, the transcription of the material, in my view, will never do justice to the rich, entertaining and complex mesh of linguistic, paralinguistic and non-verbal communication that blend to make meaning. However, transcription is essential for the purposes of transforming the video data into something that can be coded and analysed.

Duranti (2007) suggests that transcription is a transformation, citing Ochs' (1979) seminal paper as the first to discuss the complexity of transcription in general, and for children's language in particular. Duranti states that the often-cited quote from Ochs' influential work on transcription defined as: 'a selective process relying on conventions and reflecting theoretical goals and definitions' (Ochs, 1979:44), remains unchallenged. In my view, though this statement from Ochs frees the researcher from transcribing more than is necessary for the particular project in mind; a transcription that recalled all possible elements of linguistic, paralinguistic and non-linguistic features would become unmanageable and inaccessible, and therefore decisions have to be made for practical reasons as well as theoretical goals.

My approach to transcription is one suggested by Bucholtz (2000) as naturalized, where 'the process of transcription is made less visible through literacization, the privileging of written over oral discourse features' (Bucholtz, 2000:1461). The reason for this is that my analysis focuses on the level of the clause and the text, and not at the level of phonetics nor phonology. I have used standard orthography to represent all the speakers who, by and large, spoke with an accent typical of the region. There were some children whose English accents were slightly different, reflecting different heritages and languages other than English spoken at home; these differences are not captured in the transcriptions. I have included some nonstandard (eye-dialect) orthography, although this is rejected by Preston (1982 as cited in Bucholtz, 2000:1456) in that it might reflect 'negative images of the speaker'. However the retention of these examples reflect the normal and natural contractions of spoken English, for example, 'yeah' and 'I wanna'. Furthermore I have, where it occurred, chosen to reflect the children's childlike emerging grammatical knowledge as accurately as possible. The result is that at points in the excerpts there are some utterances that appear 'ungrammatical', for example, 'I need to measure this baby. How long her is' (BC-EYC3). I have sectioned the language into sentences to facilitate reading and comprehension, judging the sentence breaks by intonation and meaning,

although acknowledging that speech is not produced in terms of sentences (cf.Poland, 2003). I have also chosen to use capitalisation and punctuation to aid the accessibility of the transcript, and I have used standard typographic conventions, for example '£' to denote pounds sterling, and numbers.

> Hi, can I buy some of these shoes?
>
> They are £2 (SS-EYC2)

The conventions used in the transcriptions are suggested by Ochs (1979:63), comprising: (....) to signal inaudible language and (word) for my own approximation of a word or utterance. Pretend actions such as reading, will appear in the notes column as 'reading' or 'writing'.

So far I have described my approach to the transcription of the spoken word, however my study also focuses on the use of other semiotic resources, and in order to capture these elements (outlined in detail in Section 4.4.1) notes have been entered in a 'Notes' column to the right of the transcribed language. Swann (2010) draws attention to Norris' (2004) work as a full methodological framework that has been designed to capture comprehensively the multimodal influences on meaning-making. Although this approach to multimodal transcription can be used to foreground other communicative modes that work alongside language, it does as Swann also suggests, background the role of language. This study seeks to foreground language, without ignoring other specific aspects of meaning-making in the role-play area, and as a result, my own approach to transcription includes notes. These notes do not include the delicate features of multimodal meaning-making such as gaze and body language as these lie outside the scope of my study. However, the non-linguistic modes that are recorded, for example, if a child is holding a piece of play equipment and they refer to it, or if during their dialogue

they begin to 'write' and this appears to impinge on the meaning-making in some way; I discuss this in detail in Section 4.4.1.

One challenge of transcribing role-play language is that, as Hamo, Blum-Kulka and Hacohen (2004:78) note:

> ...children change roles, speaking in one moment as themselves and in the next as a television character. They move freely between the real and the fictitious...

In order to illustrate the movement between the child speaking as themselves and as a character in the role-play, the utterances are presented in the transcription as detailed in Table 10. I have used the terms 'in role', 'regulative' and 'other' to categorise these different 'types' of language. Briefly, in-role reflects utterances where the children are speaking as an imagined character. The term regulative is drawn from Christie's (2002) work on classroom genres. Christie's teachers' regulative language projects the content of their teaching, and as I will discuss in detail (Section 5.2.2) the regulative stages in my data project in some way the unfolding of the role-play. 'Other' language is language that is less connected to the role-plays but occurs at points during the children's interaction. Appendix VIII provides an overview of 'other' utterances.

Table 10 Presentation of utterances in the transcriptions

Label	**Description of utterance**	**Font Type**	**Sample utterance (BC-EYM1)**
In-role	**Utterance spoken as a role**	**Bold**	**What's wrong with your baby?**
Regulative	*Utterance organising the role-play*	*Italics*	*Who's the doctor?*
Other	Utterances less connected with the role-play	Normal	Hello Miss Jones

Transcription layout is another area that is discussed in the literature. Ochs (1979) argues against a script format for transcriptions of children's language because, as she notes,

children's utterances are not necessarily linked in a linear chronological fashion. She suggests that a column format presents the utterances so links are not automatically imposed, furthermore, that verbal and non-verbal behaviours should not be put in separate columns as this may occlude the relationship between the semiotic resources. However, I have decided that the script format is more readable as my main focus is lexicogrammatical choice rather than interactional patterns of turn-taking, interruptions and the like. As previously highlighted, I created a 'Notes' column to the right of the 'Utterance' column because although I consider the verbal and non-verbal behaviours as linked, understanding certain stretches of language (as I found in these data) depends at points on more contextual information than simply the text. This is the case in particular where the children refer to something in the physical context. Each turn is numbered in the transcriptions, and I define a turn as a stretch of language by one child before another child talks. While there are overlaps between the children's language I have not included these details in the transcription as they are not part of the focus of this study.

Hammersley (2010:556) notes 'there cannot be one correct transcription'. In Appendix X, I provide an example of one transcribed role-play, and one transcribed teacher introduction in Appendix XI. I acknowledge that these examples are not the only possible transcriptions, but that they exemplify the approach I have outlined in this section.

4.3.3 Data Management: The UAM Corpus Tool

The UAM Corpus Tool (UAMCT) was selected as the data management tool for RQ1 as it has been specifically designed for use in SFL language analysis. Furthermore one of the advantageous features of UAMCT in relation to this study is that the researcher is able to create unique coding schemes relating the specific texts under analysis. UAMCT was thus selected in order to annotate the multiple texts of this study using unique identical schemes (one such scheme developed for the analysis in this study is shown in Figure 8

in Section 4.4.1). Once the annotation was completed, the frequencies provided by UAMCT were used to investigate the detail of the language patterns of the individual texts (the role plays) and across the different data sets (the role-play scenarios), allowing for a comparisons to be made at different levels. While UAMCT supports and provides statistical analyses these were not presented in this study for reasons due to the small number of instances of some of the language choices, and due to the approach of this study being a qualitative study as discussed in Section 4.1. UAMCT was used for the analysis for RQ1 but not for RQ2 and I discuss the analytical approach for RQ2 in Section 4.4.3.

4.4 The analytic process and the operationalisation of the key theoretical constructs

This section will detail the analytical process and the operationalisation of the key theoretical constructs. The discussion will highlight the way in which the data drove the development of the analysis underlining the exploratory nature of this doctoral work. For example, using the notion of genre (introduced in Section 3.4.3), as I will go on to explain, was not considered at the beginning of the analysis but emerged from the close attention to the language data. In addition the development of a new interactional approach to learning in classroom role-play, and the refining of learning areas (Section 4.4.3) were also led by the data and were not categories imposed on the data at the outset. In summary, what I outline below are in part findings as well as framings of the way in which the findings and discussion are presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

4.4.1 RQ1: Register

I began the analytic process by watching and making notes of the video-recordings (as discussed in Section 4.3.1 and Table 8) and then transcribed 15 recordings that showed the children role-playing as I was initially interested in how the children used language to construct the imaginary scenarios. The analytic process started with an exploration of the children's language interaction that identified three broad 'categories' as also similarly identified in the pilot study. A decision was made as to whether each utterance was, i) spoken by the child as an imaginary role, described as in-role, ii) spoken by the child who was in some way referring to the ongoing role-play, described as regulative or iii) another unconnected utterance for example described as 'other'. While the majority of the language in the role-plays related directly to the role-play or the organisation of it, it was clear that some of the language seemed to 'belong' outside the goals of the role-play. That is to say it was neither language where the children were speaking as an imagined role, nor commenting on the role-play itself. This language has been coded as 'other' as it is not central to, nor required for the unfolding role-play interaction. A description of these utterances and examples are provided in Appendix VIII, and examples will be incorporated in the findings and discussion in Chapter 7.

The initial coding was then made more detailed in respect to the in-role and regulative utterances to include specific aspects of field, tenor and mode. In any analysis decisions must be made be taken balancing breadth versus depth, and for this research it was important to capture selective elements from within each of the register variable: field, tenor and mode. The features below were coded against the two types of utterances to explore potential differentiating register features.

Field: process type, field appropriate lexemes

Tenor: mood, speech function, modality

For an even finer level of detail, in each of these systems more analysis could have been carried out (see for example analytical detail explained in Martin et al., 2010, Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, Thompson, 2014). However, following the first phase of the analysis a decision was made to extend the focus of the analysis at a discourse semantic level encompassing genre (see Section 4.4.2), rather than in more depth at the level of register.

Within field, the focus on process was to understand 'the core of the clause from the experiential perspective: the clause is primarily about the action, event or state that the participants are involved in' (Thompson, 2014:92). In the coding of process, in an utterance such as: 'I want to buy some more shoes' (SS-EYC2) where there are two processes ('to want' and 'to buy'), I have chosen to analyse the two processes as separate clauses. This analytical decision differs from the way in which these types of utterances would be coded following Halliday and Matthiessen (2014:568), where they suggest the utterance would be coded as a single clause with the second of the processes realising the process type. However, the alternative approach was chosen in order to give, as Martin, Matthiessen and Painter (2010:115) suggest 'equal status to both verbal groups'. The use of field appropriate lexical items was also deemed important as this could be a clear way in which the children might build the field linguistically, using, for example, items such as: infection, heart, throat, blood, and the like in the baby clinic.

The tenor of the interaction was explored by examining the children's use of mood, speech function and modality. I explored how speech functions were instantiated using non-congruent realisations and how these instances of interpersonal grammatical metaphor impacted on the tenor of the utterance. As outlined in Section 3.4.2, the system of modality is complex and delicate with simultaneous systems of type, commitment and responsibility. For the purposes of this thesis I have chosen not to analyse modality at this level of detail, and I focus on the level of modalisation and modulation only.

In terms of mode, I decided to focus on the impact of classroom role-play semiotic resources, in particular, how the children invoked changes of channel and language as either constitutive or ancillary (as introduced in Section 3.4.2). The theoretical conceptualisation of multimodality is an emerging field (for a range of SFL multimodal studies see O'Halloran, 2004b), and in order to analyse how the linguistic and other semiotic resources construed meaning in this SFL study, I have applied the notions of language as constitutive and ancillary to the use of props as the other semiotic resources, inspired by Bowcher's (2007) multimodal work. A system diagram in UAMCT was developed to enable the linguistic clause level coding, alongside the role of language (as constitutive or ancillary). Using the video data together with my observation notes, where appropriate, I have thus coded each clause to highlight whether I considered it to be constitutive or ancillary, and if ancillary the material or non-linguistic action accompanying it. By material action in this study I mean the particular semiotic resources that are typical of the resources provided in classroom role-play areas were selected and are classed as the 'material action':

- Dressing up clothes
- Paper, pens, clip board
- Telephones, tannoy
- Role-play 'equipment' such as toy food, doctors kit, shoes in the shoe shop (as detailed in Table 6 above)

It is worth acknowledging here that utterances coded as role of language: constitutive may have other meaningful semiotic resources working alongside them (such as tone of voice) but these are considered outside the scope of this study. Therefore, in my analysis, it is only semiotic resources as listed above that make an utterance ancillary.

Figure 8 shows the coding scheme for role of language. As this study is primarily a study of language, there is no option for verbal action to be absent. If the language was deemed ancillary then material action was coded as present.

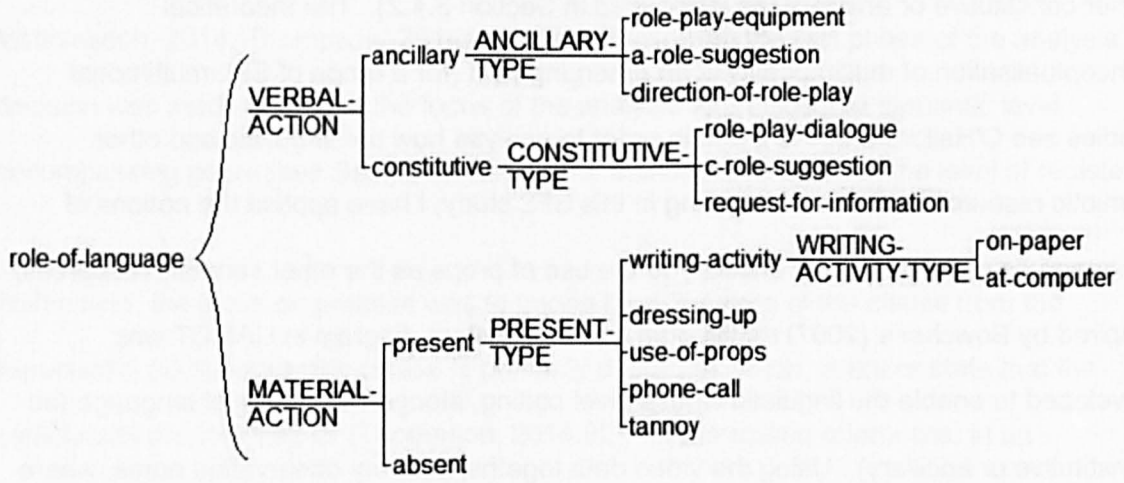

Figure 8 UAMCT scheme for role of language

The type of linguistic analysis conducted was aided by the use of the UAMCT tool (see earlier Section 4.3.3) which provided frequencies, and I was able to make comparisons between coded features, for example across scenario type or between linguistic features. While the study is foremost a qualitative enquiry, facilitated by UAMCT, I present counts and percentages alongside language extracts of different analyses to highlight key points in the interpretation and discussion in Chapters 5 and 6.

During the analysis of the language and other semiotic resources described above, I identified key linguistic features that clearly differentiated the in-role and regulative language, and two additional points began to emerge from this ongoing analytic phase. It appeared that meanings were being created through the dynamically unfolding role-play text and not simply synoptically, and that these meanings were being construed through what appeared to be stages reminiscent of similar real life social encounters. The implication of this new insight was that a synoptic description of the language choices based on register alone no longer accurately captured the children's meaning-making. It

therefore became important to accommodate, theoretically and analytically, the complete text (i.e. from beginning to end of the recording) and to find a way of describing it unfolding dynamically. Furthermore, the meanings were being construed collaboratively between the children. The notion of genre (as theorised by Martin, 1992) introduced in Section 3.4.3, was identified as a useful theoretical construct to accommodate the dynamic co-construction of meaning across the complete role-play recording, aligning closely with the register analysis already conducted, and in fact being realised by the language choices identified in the early analysis. I turn now to discuss now the way in which the genre analysis was conducted.

4.4.2 RQ1: Genre analysis

The genre analysis began with an exploration of SFL research into 'real life' (that is not role-play) adult interactions undertaken in similar social encounters to those in the classroom role-play. The work most closely matching the classroom scenarios was research by Tebble (1999) on doctor-patient consultations and Ventola (1987) on sales and service encounters. By looking at the real life research, I wanted to explore if and how the children were appropriating the stages and social goals reminiscent of a similar real life scenario. To distinguish between the stages identified in the research of Tebble and Ventola and those stages that appear in the children's language data in this thesis, I refer to Tebble and Ventola's research and stages as 'real life' (see Section 1.3). In order to analyse the genre stages of the role-play scenarios, first I took the stages identified in the work of Ventola (1987) and Tebble (1999) and 'applied these' to each of the in-role utterances in the role-play data in a 'top down common sense' approach following Eggins and Slade (1997). Tebble's stages identified in her work on doctor-patient scenarios were aligned to the baby clinic and the vet's role-plays, and Ventola's service encounter stages to the cafe, shoe shop and pet shop role-play scenarios as summarised in Table 11. In Section 5.2.1, Table 16 and Table 17 I provide sample utterances for each of the stages.

Table 11 Genre stages in research on analogous real life adult scenarios

Role-play scenarios	**Classed as:**	**Stages drawn from:**	**Stages from real life empirical research**
Baby Clinic Vet's	Clinician Consultation	Tebble 1999	Greeting Introductions Eliciting Problem Diagnosing facts Exposition (Decision by client) Clarifying any residual matters Conclusion Farewell
Cafe Pet Shop Shoe shop	Service encounter	Ventola 1987	Greeting Attendance allocation Service Resolution Handover Pay Closing Goodbye

In line with Eggins and Slade (1997), I began identifying and refining the early analysis and differentiating the stages within the two types of social encounter, and investigating the typical lexicogrammatical features of each stage initiation across the five different role-play scenarios and the 15 different recordings. I began also to examine the regulative language as being comprised of stages. Utterances categorised as 'other' were not included as part of the genre analysis as these utterances did not contribute to the actual role-playing or the organising of the role-play.

4.4.3 RQ2, Learning language, learning through language and learning about language: Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities in classroom role-play

The analytic framework that I outline in this section for RQ2 emerged as I worked through the data. It builds on the existing knowledge reported in the literature (and discussed in Chapter 2 and 3), and it is conceptualised in response to the particular interactional context of classroom role-play: a teacher-class introduction followed by a child-led role-play further guided by a themed role-play area. It is thus both an analytical framework and a finding of the study. However the discussion is included here, in the Methodology Chapter, in order to explicate how the analysis was carried out and is framed, and how the discussion in Chapter 7 is organised.

Theories of learning were discussed in Chapter 3 where I outlined the notions and relevance to my research of scaffolding (Bruner, 1978) (Section 3.2.2) and visible and invisible mediation (Hasan, 2003) (Section 3.3.2). I have used both to inform my own focus on language and dialogic interaction. However, I believe that neither is able to fully conceptualise the learning context of classroom role-play. In contrast to research that focuses on learning in task orientated activities, explaining learning in an activity such as classroom role-play is more difficult to pin down. In response and driven by the data, this study had to capture the potential moments of learning in classroom role-play across two time frames (the teacher introduction and the later role-plays), and two types of learning interaction, the first being asymmetrical and more formal and conscious (the teacher introductions), the second being symmetrical, less formal and more serendipitous (the children's role-plays). I therefore developed an interactional approach that focuses on learning to highlight where a child's ZPD may have been extended and where learning might be said to have occurred through the two different types of interaction, first, to describe direct teaching or an offer of knowledge where a teacher or child is aware of

imparting knowledge, I use the term Interactional Guidance. Second, learning that is serendipitously created between the children in the role-play scenarios and where the knowledge is co-constructed is described as Interactional Opportunity.

a) Interactional Guidance

i. teacher priming in the teacher introductions evidenced by child response in the role-plays

ii. child question and child response in the role-plays

b) Interactional Opportunity

iii. child to child interaction in the role-plays

The two planes and the three points of the approach are illustrated in Figure 9:

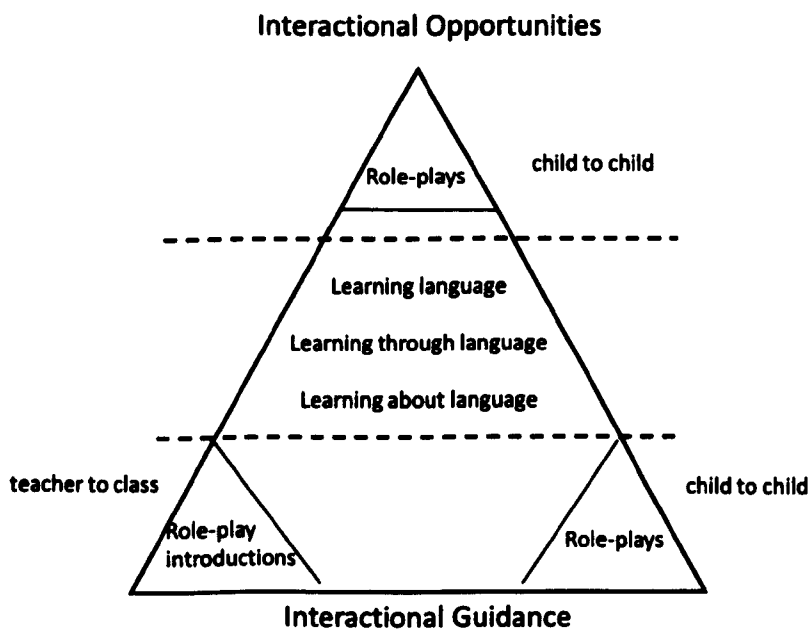

Figure 9 Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities

Interactional Guidance (IG) occurs firstly in the role-play introductions where the teachers prime the role-play scenario with the whole class. The focus of the mediational process is

between the teacher and the class (and individual respondent). The process extends into the role-plays, where pupils can be seen to be following guidance from the introductions. Secondly it occurs in the role-plays between the children where a child offers their own knowledge to their peers. The focus here is on the teachers' and children's linguistic choices to prime learning. I consider that the children have had the potential to extend their ZPD if a term or behaviour has been appropriated from the teacher introductions in some way.

The second point of the interactional approach and an important aspect of this study is to investigate the children's interactions within the role-play itself where learning may be occurring in a more symmetrical relationship and informal context: Interactional Opportunities (IO). Here there may also be some conscious 'teaching' (as discussed) where the children supply responses to their peers' questions, or offer knowledge (IG), but often the opportunities are more subtle. The learning opportunities are of the type that arise during an exchange between the children and are not foregrounded necessarily as 'new' information. These opportunities cannot be said to be 'scaffolding' in the way in which the notion has been defined because the information is not presented by a teacher as new knowledge or offered as a response to a question. They are, I argue, also different to instances of invisible mediation as defined by (Hasan, 2003) in that they are not common sense knowledge but as I will demonstrate, may link to areas of learning that are 'educational' in nature. The framework for analysing how the children are learning has been described, and I now turn to what learning might occur in the classroom role-plays.

Learning Areas

While the 4-5 year old children participants of this study are engaged in role-play in social scenarios and not necessarily at first sight engaged in 'academic meaning-making', I am interested in the learning opportunities that are presented that might be said in some way

to support the children's longer term academic learning. In Chapter 2 I suggested that learning categories captured in the literature may benefit from being refined. Illuminated in part by the linguistic, educational and policy literature and driven by the data, certain learning areas were selected to exemplify learning language, learning through language and learning about language. Three learning areas were highlighted from the linguistic literature: semantic fields (Painter, 1996, 1999b), cause-effect language (Painter, 1999b) abstract and decontextualised language (Torr and Simpson, 2003). Three are reflected in a broader spectrum of research traditions including linguistic and educational research, and EYFS documentation: sociocultural expectations (Ochs and Schieffelin, [1984] 2001), literacy (Bodrova and Leong, 2006, Japiassu, 2008, Hoyte et al., 2014) and numeracy (Aubrey and Durmaz, 2012). These six areas emerged from the data and were conceptualised as learning areas in this study by drawing on existing work in related research. The learning areas can be said to contribute to the children's building of 'formal' or 'academic' knowledge. Furthermore I explain how they relate to Halliday's broad definitions of learning language, learning through language and learning about language discussed in Section 3.3.1.

i. Expanding and learning new semantic fields

The term semantic field is used to suggest that '..related words may be grouped into areas or fields. The meaning of a word would depend partly on its relationship to other items in the field.' (Swann et al., 2004:273). New words, vocabulary and their meanings are the building blocks around which children expand their understanding of the world. While the Early Years resource 'Development Matters' (The British Association for Early Childhood Education, 2012:20), suggests that adults in EY can 'Help children to build their vocabulary by extending the range of their experiences', I suggest that this is a simplistic view and propose a focus on how these lexical items should be considered as embedded within semantic fields fitting within a particular structure, collocations, taxonomies and contexts. A language learner must learn new lexical items, understand how these items fit

within different categories and how they relate to other lexical items Children must without doubt learn new vocabulary, (learning language) but learning new words is not as simple as memorising a new sequence of sounds. Children must understand how to create new meanings with the lexical items, that is to say, how to use these lexical items within different contexts, align them to different categories, build new and extend existing semantic fields, and understand how they relate to other phenomena in those and other semantic fields (Aitchison, 1994). As I discussed in Section 2.3.2, the 'signification of a lexical item involves the simultaneous value relation into which it enters' (Painter, 1996:55).

ii. Cause-effect relations (Painter, 1999a) and meanings

The ability to express and understand cause-effect relations is foundational for the expression of academic meaning.

> The ability to infer cause-effect relations is fundamental to notions of 'logical' or 'scientific' thinking, and the fostering of the abilities to reason and hypothesize are prominent educational goals throughout the Western world. (Painter, 1999a:245)

I identify the causal relations present in the children's language data and explore them firstly from the perspective of what learning opportunities these language choices afford in the particular environment of classroom role-play, and secondly from the perspective of allowing the child to practise and for their peers to hear these relations expressed within particular social encounters.

iii. Learning to express new meanings through decontextualised and abstract language

The ability to understand and make abstract meanings is important for a child's academic and educational development as discussed previously. A way in which decontextualised and abstract meanings are made, in the SFL view, is through grammatical metaphor. As noted, ideational grammatical metaphor in SFL is distinguished from non-metaphorical

language through a cline of congruence (although it is acknowledged that congruence is not clear cut). Grammatical metaphor is relevant to a child's language learning and learning through language as it is a common linguistic feature of academic written language but less so of informal spoken language. The gradual learning of grammatical metaphor prepares young children for later academic work as metaphorical choices are the linguistic realisation of decontextualized and more abstract meanings, and thus important steps in developing reasoning, literacy (Snow, 1983:170) and 'academic' language more broadly (Torr and Simpson, 2003).

iv. Learning to be literate and numerate

Classroom role-play is a resource that encourages learning about literacy and numeracy and how to mean in literate and numerate ways as discussed in linguistic, educational and policy literature (Chapter 2). Paper is provided to 'write', for example, a shopping list or prescription. The role-play area is furnished with context specific instruments that require numerical scales to communicate meaning. In the baby clinic there is measuring, weighing the baby, taking the baby's temperature. In the pet shop, shoe shop and cafe money has to be exchanged. In addition the shoe shop requires the communication of shoe sizes. All these activities require the communication of meaning through measurement and numbers.

v. Sociocultural awareness

As outlined in Chapter 1 the focus of this study is on real life role-play rather than fantasy scenarios and I wanted to explore what opportunities these types of scenarios presented in terms of extending the children's sociocultural understandings through their use of language, in short, the process of language socialisation as discussed in Chapter 2. With the sociocultural lens adopted together with the children's socially and culturally organised social interactions, such as a pretend doctor's consultation, the exploration of the use of language from a sociocultural perspective is appropriate. The play interactions offer the

possibilities to experiment with social roles and lexico-grammatical choices in ways in which children do not have access in the 'real world'. Furthermore there are opportunities for the children to build metalinguistic awareness and develop their understanding that different language choices are appropriate for different social roles and different contexts. The theoretical perspective of SFL places language in social context. This learning area connects with the SFL notions of genre and register discussed in Section 2.4.2 and the value of genre in the context of children's language and learning is captured by Martin and Rose (2007:8):

> As children, we learn to recognize and distinguish the typical genres of our culture, by attending to consistent patterns of meaning as we interact with others in various situations. Since patterns of meaning are relatively consistent for each genre we can learn to predict how each situation is likely to unfold, and learn how to interact in it.

In summary, I identify moments where these learning areas are foregrounded in some way, either through priming by the teachers in the introductions, or by the children spontaneously in the role-plays and consider how these moments are foregrounded linguistically and what they suggest in terms of learning. As previously mentioned (Chapter 2), role-play competes for time against the more 'formal' programmes but I will argue in Chapter 7 that the identification of these learning areas in the data suggest that classroom role-play can be linked to longer term academic and social success.

The process of data analysis in order to address RQ2 is outlined below.

1) Analysis of teacher transcribed introductions to identify Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities within the learning areas
2) Analysis of children's transcribed role-play texts to confirm appropriation of foregrounded learning areas as in 1. above

3) Analysis of children's transcribed role-play texts to identify Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities within the learning areas in the children's talk.

These analyses were collated in a spreadsheet to enable searches across the role-play scenarios and children's groups. From the teacher introductions, if a term or prop is introduced in the teacher introduction I considered a possible ZPD extension if a child can be seen to appropriate that term or use the prop in some way in the role-plays. The learning areas span Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities and are mapped broadly onto the three types of learning as illustrated here and summarised in Table 12:

a) Learning language
    i. Lexical items / semantic fields
    ii. Grammatical structures
b) Learning through language
    iii. Cause-effect relations - focusing on linguistic features such as 'because'; 'that means'
    iv. Decontextualised and abstract language – identification of language that references concepts outside the physical context of the role-play area and the ongoing activity
    v. Learning to be literate and numerate
c) Learning about language
    vi. Sociocultural awareness
    vii. Genre and register

Table 12 Interactional Guidance and interactional opportunities

IG or IO	Interaction	Focus	Data examples
Interactional Guidance	Teacher to class interactions during role-play introductions	IRF	Do you know what this is for? (Mrs Cook)
		Multimodal modelling	So if you are the waiter… you ask nicely 'what would you like to have today?' (Mrs Masters)
Interactional Guidance	Child to child interaction in the role-play	Responses to questions and offers of knowledge	You've writ the P the wrong way round (BC-EYM1)
Interactional Opportunities		Non-linguistic semiotic resources	Do you mind seeing what's inside his throat with that? It's a light. (BC-EYC3)
		Self-repetition	Don't put it there or they will be died, dead, died (V-EYM3)

4.4.4 Analytical Issues

In any linguistic analysis, decisions about coding rest with the researcher. There are four points in relation to coding decisions that I will highlight in this section. First, while the framework of SFL provided a strong framework for the language coding, the boundaries of the coding categories specific to this research and outside the SFL framework (for example if an utterance was in-role, regulative or coded as 'other) were less certain for a small number of utterances. For instance 'it's closed' (BC-EYM1) might have been understood to be a regulative or an in-role utterance. I use the term utterance broadly to describe a stretch of spoken language that may be the equivalent to a single word or a clause. A speaker turn in the transcriptions may include one or more than one utterance.

Second, with the coding of the genre stages, decisions needed to be made on utterances that might have been understood as two different stage types. The reason for the ambiguity was mainly due to the children's understanding of the social situations which are clearly only emerging. One of the ways of being able to establish the stage of some of the more ambiguous utterances was to take into account which role (for example the doctor) delivered the utterance, and where the utterance appeared in relation to others.

Coding of roles was a third area of difficulty. The roles adopted by the children during the role-plays were not agreed prior to the recording nor fixed for the complete duration of the recording; often roles would change mid-recording. This spontaneity was on the one hand highly creative and reflected the nature of the peer-led activity. On the other hand it caused complications in the coding. In the Clinician Consultation there were always two clinicians to one parent or pet owner. Similarly, in the Service Encounters there were always two members of 'staff' (shop keepers or waiting staff) to every one customer. This distribution of roles was determined by the children spontaneously during the role-play and not pre-planned as part of the research design. Each utterance was coded by role (i.e. imagined social role). The consequence of this coding decision is the quantitative findings relating to roles, as in the example shown in Table 13, are weighted differently. The finding that 62% of the utterances in the shoe shop were made by the shop assistant reflects two shop assistants, and that 34% were made by the customer reflects one customer (see also Appendix XIII).

Table 13 Coding of roles

Scenario	Roles			Total clauses
Baby Clinic	Doctor and/ or Nurse 89% (315)	Parent 11% (40)	Other n/a	355
Vet's	Vet and or/ Nurse 56% (99)	Pet owner 22% (40)	Other 22% (39)	178
Cafe	Waiting staff 70% (292)	Customer 30% (126)	Other n/a	418
Shoe shop	Shop assistant 62% (199)	Customer 34% (109)	Other 4% (12)	320
Pet shop	Shop assistant 43% (136)	Customer 38% (118)	Other 19% (58)	313

Another point in relation to roles was that there were moments in some of the role-plays where the children were clearly playing 'a role' yet the role had not been named by any of the children, nor was it obvious from the scenario what the role was. In these instances that occurred in the scenarios of pet shop, shoe shop and the vets, I coded for 'role-other' as shown in Table 13 above.

The final point in a critical discussion of the analytical approach is that while there were regular opportunities to discuss the coding decisions with the supervisory team and reviews of the coding were carried out throughout the data analysis phase, a separate recoding of the complete data set was not carried out. There was therefore a lack of opportunity for a full inter-rater reliability check and this may be considered a limitation to the study (other limitations are discussed in Chapter 8).

4.5 Chapter 4 Conclusions

In Chapter 2, I discussed the continuing interest in, and relevance of the study of children's meaning-making and learning in classroom role-play. However, I suggested that new methodological approaches to classroom role-play must be employed if we are to understand in detail what children's language 'looks like' in classroom role-play and what opportunities there are for learning. In Chapter 3, I outlined a theoretical framework that draws on Vygotskian and Hallidayan theories of learning, and a systemic functional perspective to language. I proposed that this theoretical framework is ideally positioned to capture the delicate language choices of the children that in some way construe a social scenario reminiscent of a similar real life encounter.

In the first part of this chapter (Section 4.2) I outlined the details of my methodological approach, and discussed the methods and the details of the data that were collected, the profile of the research site, the rationale for the selection of these methods and of the data, and my approach to ethics and transcription. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 focused on the analytic framework. I explained how neither the constructs of scaffolding (Bruner, 1978) and visible and invisible mediation (Hasan, 2003) quite captured the processes I identified in the data. Nor could they account for the learning processes across the two related sites. I therefore generated my own constructs of Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunity, positioning these within an interactional approach to learning, which I have used to structure my analysis. I suggested that this interactional linguistic approach to learning in classroom role-play is a framework that provides a focus on the specific learning opportunities presented in classroom role-play including recognition of the informal spontaneous interactions that can extend a child's ZPD. However, as it is impossible to tell what knowledge the children bring with them to the role-plays from previous experience, I shall present the examples of learning as potential. The approach is both a finding and a framework, but it is presented here before the findings and

discussion chapter (Chapter 7) to explain the way in which the data driven analysis emerged and was conducted. Having explained the development of my methodological approach, data collection and analytic framework in Chapter 4, I will present the findings from my research in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In Chapter 5 and 6 I address RQ1, and in Chapter 7 I focus on RQ2.

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5 The co-construction and unfolding of genre stages: classroom role-play

5.1 Introduction

In Chapters 5 and 6 I present my findings and discussion related to RQ1:

> How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social situations in the context of classroom role-play?
>
> a) How are role-plays organised?
> b) How do lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices influence role-play?

In Chapter 5, I will focus on RQ1(a) and will present the empirical findings of the data analysis to propose that the organisation of the children's role-play interaction is through the co-construction of stages. In addition I will propose a theoretical conceptualisation of children's classroom role-play as an oral genre. In Chapter 6, I focus on RQ1(b) and how the children's lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices realise the individual genre stages.

The literature review (Chapter 2) highlighted that linguistic research into children's role-play has identified the presence of register features (for example Blum-Kulka et al., 2004, Kyratzis, 2007) and regulative utterances (for example Göncü, 1993, Sawyer, 1997). I have suggested that while these features in existing research provide a foundation to explain how children construe a social encounter in role-play, they only illuminate a partial view of children's meaning-making. I also discussed other research into children's talk that explored children's oral genres although this work has focused primarily on oral

narratives produced by individual children. While there has been some research into genres in children's conversations (Preece, 1987, Hicks, 1990, Hoyte et al., 2014) and thus oral genres that are co-constructed, work has not yet applied genre to children's collaborative role-play. In response to these two points and in order to contribute further to the field, I proposed the consideration of children's classroom role-play through the lens of genre (Martin, 1992) to investigate meanings that are created dynamically through a series of stages across an unfolding role-play interaction.

In Section 5.2 I present the empirical findings of the analysis that identified stages in the children's role-plays and suggest there are two types of stages, i) the children speaking as an imagined role (in-role), ii) the children speaking as themselves organising the role-play (regulative), as first introduced in Section 4.3.2. I discuss how these different types of stages work together in Section 5.3, and in Section 5.4 I build on these findings to argue that classroom role-play can be conceptualised theoretically as an oral genre. In Chapter 6, I sharpen the focus to present the findings of the differentiating lexicogrammatical and other semiotic resources in the in-role stages.

5.2 Classroom role-play: staging the interaction

In this section I will present data extracts and the findings of the analysis that demonstrate children's classroom role-play to be organised as a series of predictable stages. The stages, I will argue, can be categorised into two types of stage, in-role and regulative, that together enable the organisation of a life-like imaginary social scenario. I will take each stage type in turn and present their functions in the unfolding text, and in the case of the regulative stages, the patterns of lexicogrammatical features of each stage.

5.2.1 The in-role stages

The exploration of genre as a notion in relation to the classroom role-play data (first discussed in Section 4.4.2) emerged as I examined whether the utterances where the children are speaking as a role, could be said to relate in some way to the stages that have been identified in real life social scenarios of the same type. For convenience I repeat Table 11 from Section 4.4.2 as Table 14 below, as a basis for illustrating how the five role-play scenarios were mapped against real life research in similar social interactions. I classified the baby clinic and the vet's role-play scenarios as Clinician Consultations based on Tebble's (1999) work on interpreted doctor-patient communication, and the cafe, shoe shop and pet shop role-play scenarios as Service Encounters, based on Ventola (1987), using her own genre label.

Table 14 The role-play scenarios and real life research by Tebble (1999) and Ventola (1987)

Scenario	**Termed:**	**Stages from:**	**Stages**
Baby Clinic Vet's	Clinician Consultation	Tebble 1999	Greeting Introductions Eliciting Problem Diagnosing facts Exposition (Decision by client) Clarifying any residual matters Conclusion Farewell
Cafe Pet Shop Shoe shop	Service Encounter	Ventola 1987	Greeting Attendance allocation Service Service bid Resolution Handover Pay Closing Goodbye

I found that the stages as identified by Tebble (1999) and Ventola (1987) did appear in the children's role-plays. I also found that in the role-plays there were utterances that were clearly spoken as an imagined role, but that did not align to the real life stages above. These utterances I have termed 'enhancing utterances' as, I will argue, they enhance the children's imaginary scenario, but they do not contribute directly to the social goal of the particular social encounter. I consider the enhancing utterances part of, and an extension to the in-role language, and I will discuss this language in more detail later in this section.

The short extract in Table 15 illustrates how stages identified in the real life service encounter research (Ventola, 1987) can be mapped against an instantiation of a role-play where two children are buying a rabbit in a pet shop. Although the interaction does not show a 'complete' set of stages (as identified in Ventola, 1987), there are enough stages constructed for the interaction to be reminiscent of a pet shop service encounter.

Table 15 A complete service encounter in a pet shop (EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage	Notes
6	Nicole (customer)	**Hello,**	Greeting	Nicole picks up a toy rabbit from the display
		may I buy a rabbit? **What do I need? Can I have a cage? And I need a very little one,**	Service	
		thank you.	Goods handover	The customer hands the 'cage' to the shopkeeper.
		What else do I need? **Look a parrot**	Service	Looking round the role-play area Picks up a bird puppet
7	Philip (shop assistant)	**Do you want the parrot or the rabbit? That's a rabbit**	Service bid	Picks up another toy animal
8	Nicole (customer)	**Is it 2 p?**	Pay	Hands over some 'money' and closes the transaction

While not every role-play is completed quite so efficiently (discussed in more detail in Section 5.3.1), and most are interwoven with the regulative utterances serving different functions (as I will discuss in detail in Section 5.2.2), the extract in Table 15 above shows how the in-role language can be described as a series of stages. In this short exchange, Nicole and Philip have 'become' customer and shopkeeper respectively through their

language choices in the unfolding text. It demonstrates that while literature identified in Chapter 2 suggests that children may appropriate relevant register features (for example Hoyle, 1998, Blum-Kulka and Snow, 2004, Kyratzis, 2004) there are also dynamic meanings at the level of the text that, in this data, are contributing to the construal of the scenario. By this I mean, it is not simply the use of particular field specific lexical terms that ensures the exchange is reminiscent of a service encounter, but the dialogic nature of the children's language where they can be seen to exchange and construe meanings through their language and their use of props throughout the short interaction.

In relation to the baby clinic and the vet's scenarios in particular, as well as the real life scenario stages, I found that there were also additional stages that occurred in the children's role-plays highlighted by their frequency and existence across the groups. These two additional in-role stages are:

- Personal details
- Treatment

The Personal details stage describes the doctor or vet taking down the name of the patient or pet as illustrated by the brief example below from EYM1 in the baby clinic:

> Doctor: What's the baby's name?
>
> Parent: Anya

In a real life encounter, these details would already be available to the clinician (doctor, nurse or vet). However in classroom role-play, asking for these details is, in part, in response to the emphasis placed on writing by the teachers as evidenced in the introductions:

> And when you have written down all the things about the baby on the record sheets, like these, you can show them to me. Make sure your name is on it, make sure the baby's name is on it, make sure you've put down how much it weighs, how old it is and maybe how long the baby is too, you can measure with the tape

measure. If it needs an injection could you write it on there too? (Mrs Cook - baby clinic introduction)

The second stage to be included, was that of Treatment. This stage is not captured in the real world research but it is possible that there may be some 'treatment' carried out in a baby clinic or vet's, for example injections. The role-play data showed the children carrying out treatment, and this stage, I suggest, is linked to the children's (unstated) goals of the activity, that is, to play with and explore the role-play props. This point is highlighted in the nurse's utterance below:

> Nurse: Okay she's eaten a load of food. That means you have to cut her tummy doctor. I'll just take out the food. Where's my knife? Doctor, where's my knife? (BC-EYM1)

While the stages of Personal details and Treatment may not always occur in real life social encounters, the stages still contribute in some way to the children being able to construe a scenario reminiscent of a real life encounter, and also demonstrate their creation of a peer culture (Corsaro, 1985). There were no new stages identified in the Service Encounter.

In-role stage frequencies

As first highlighted in Table 15, not all instantiations of the role-plays moved through the complete set of stages as identified in the real world research in Table 14. Additionally some stages were initiated more often than others. I present the frequencies of the stage initiations (as discussed in Section 4.4.2) of the Clinician Consultation and the Service Encounter, and draw from each type of interaction key points that are demonstrated in particular in those interactions. In Table 16, I show the stage initiations of the Clinician Consultation. The table shows how many times, across the three recordings of each role-play scenario (three baby clinic and three vet's), each stage was initiated. For example,

the stage of Personal details was initiated ten times in the baby clinic and four times in the vet's scenarios.

Table 16 Stage initiation frequency for Clinician Consultation

Stage	**Stage initiation frequency**			**Sample utterances**
	Baby clinic	**Vet's**	**Total**	
Greetings	3	3	6	Hello
Introductions	2	1	3	We've got two babies even. They're both called twins.
Personal details	10	4	14	What's her name?
Stating/ eliciting problem	9	5	14	What's the matter
Diagnosing facts	19	7	26	The baby is fourteen long
Treatment	6	7	11	I'll just take out all the food.
Exposition	11	9	20	Her needs to stay here for a night.
Clarifying any residual matters	2	0	2	Does she need medicine?
Conclusion	3	2	5	Okay, you have to go home, we'll take care of her.
Farewell	0	0	0	
Total	65	38	101	

The findings in Table 16 show that almost all stages (other than Farewell) from the real life research and the two new stages identified, were attempted by the children during the course of their role-plays. While there were some differences between the baby clinic interaction and the vet's scenarios, the stages that were initiated the most frequently were those that occur normally part way through an interaction of this type, that is, the Personal

details through to the Exposition stage. The stages that were enacted less frequently were at the beginning and end, and I discuss the possible reasons for these findings in Section 5.3. Table 17 shows the stage initiation frequency of the Service Encounter. Each of the scenarios were played three times by three different groups.

Table 17 Stage initiation frequency of the Service Encounter

Stage	**Stage initiation frequency**				**Sample utterances**
	Cafe	**Pet shop**	**Shoe shop**	**Total**	
Greeting	6	3	6	15	Hello
Attendance allocation	3	0	1	4	Can I come to the shop?
Service bid	25	2	10	37	What would you like to drink sir?
Service	29	11	15	55	Can I have some coffee and a sandwich please?
Resolution	6	0	1	7	She finished the chicken
Goods handover	10	3	3	16	Here's some for you
Pay	8	4	7	19	The pizza's £5
Closing	6	3	0	9	Thanks, here's your change
Goodbye	2	3	0	5	Bye
Total	95	29	43	167	

Table 17 shows again how the different stages were used in the different role-play scenarios highlighting which of the stages were initiated most and the least frequently. There were no additional stages and the patterns are similar to the Clinician Consultation in that the stages instantiated most often are in the middle of the interaction, i.e. Service bid and Service.

Even accounting for repetition and reiteration of certain stages, the children do not run through a neatly completed social encounter taking in all the possible in-role stages before starting a new role-play. Based on the frequency of the stage initiations I suggest that some of the in-role stages are more weakly or more strongly developed, and I will discuss how certain stages cluster in Section 5.3.1. That is to say, not only does a greater frequency suggest the children feel most comfortable playing out these particular stages, but that these stages in particular index most strongly the social encounter for the children.

The data highlight that almost all of the stages were attempted across the five scenarios. This finding is important as it demonstrates clearly the children attempting to appropriate the role-play that has been suggested by the Early Years team. It challenges an observation by Rogers and Evans who suggest that 'the actual thematic content of the play (for example, playing the customer in the shop) appeared to be of less interest to the children than the opportunity to play with and talk to other children' (Rogers and Evans, 2008:115). The wider data set, from which the 15 recordings were chosen, did show children coming together to play and not always in role-play (as Table 8 in Section 4.3.1 illustrated), however, almost 60% of the language (from the corpus of 15 recordings) was analysed as the children engaged in playing one of the roles across the different scenarios. Therefore, while I argue that the content of the play is extremely important to the children in this study, I acknowledge questions around the reasons as to why the scenario is not instantiated in some of the other role-plays remain unanswered due the selected focus of the work here.

Enhancing utterances

While I have illustrated how the children appeared to move through most of the stages identified in real life scenarios, these genre stages do not account for all the utterances

(and therefore all the potential stages) found in the data. However, this is not a real world encounter, this is children's role-play, and as such there are moments (as there can be outside role-play), that do not align neatly into the in-role stages identified in the real life research. Language or stages that do not align directly with the real life scenarios (Ventola, 1987, Tebble, 1999) but are nevertheless 'in-role' have been coded as 'enhancing utterances'. These enhancing utterances are extensions of the creation of a play scenario for the children, but they do not contribute directly to the 'goal' of the social encounter i.e. buying a meal in the cafe, and they reflect the creativity of the children who are developing the social scenario being played out. By way of example, Table 18 shows an extract illustrating enhancing utterances, where two members of cafe staff close the shop, clear up, eat their own dinner and prepare for the next morning. This language is not captured in the real life research which focused on the main goal of the interaction, but it extends the imaginary play scenario and is an important part of children's interaction.

Table 18 Example of Enhancing utterances from HC-EYC3

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage type: stage	Notes
159	Daniel (waiting staff)	**We need to close it now**	In-role: Closing	Yusra leaves the main role-play area
		Can you leave Yusra because we need to have our own food because we need to close	Regulative: Role-play direction	
		Closed	In-role: Closing	
		Now let's have our own food	Enhancing utterances	
160	Meggie (waiting staff)	**I'll have chips and waffles**		Meggie sits down
161	Daniel (waiting staff)	It's closed, it's closed. We've closed it for our own dinner		Talking to researcher
162	Meggie (waiting staff)	**Is there any (...) here**		Talking to Daniel
163	Daniel (waiting staff)	**We need to clean this table up now**		
164	Meggie (waiting staff)	**Yes. I'll clean it up**		
166	Daniel (waiting staff)	**And I'll put the bowls out for tomorrow. I need to put the bowls out**		Talking to Meggie

While the enhancing utterances that begin at turn 159 do not align with the in-role stages that I have so far presented, the language is nonetheless contributing in a highly creative way to the role-play, 'Players do not simply reproduce pre-formed adult roles, but actively re-create playful versions of them' (Martin and Dombey, 2002:52). For the purposes of this study, I consider the identification of possible discrete stages within the enhancing

utterances to be outside the scope of this work, and in this chapter, while I draw attention to their presence, I maintain a focus on the identified stages that comprise the regulative and in-role language. I turn now to the presentation of the utterances that were found to be regulative in function.

5.2.2 The regulative stages

The children's role-plays are primed by the teachers' introductions, but the unique instantiations are created in the moment by the children themselves. As a result of this spontaneity, at times the children require a way to assist the unfolding role-play. The analysis showed that in each of the role-play instantiations, the children initiate and bid for particular roles, they comment on the play equipment, and they explicitly direct the unfolding play. Utterances such as these have already been identified in research into children's play (for example Sutton-Smith, 1997, Gordon, 2002), and it is widely agreed these utterances are important to children's role-play (as discussed in Section 2.3.3). However, regulative language has been discussed mainly outside the frame of play and therefore considered separately to the play. Building on existing work and using the lens of genre, I argue that it is productive to understand regulative language in terms of stages and thus as an integral part of the role-play interaction. That is to say, it is useful to consider the meanings in the regulative language not as isolated and disconnected from the surrounding text, but part of the dialogic process that unfolds over a number of turns.

In the data I have identified three regulative stages. Unlike the in-role stages, the regulative stages do not always logically flow from one to another. While this characteristic might suggest that they are not stages as typically defined in genre theory, they are identified here as stages for three reasons. Firstly, each stage has a functional goal that relates to, and directly facilitates, the in-role stages as illustrated in Table 19.

Table 19 Regulative stages, description and example realisations

Regulatory Stages	Description	Example realisation (BC-EYM1)
Role-suggestion	The children request, demand or suggest a role for themselves or another in the group	You're the doctor. I'm the nurse
Role-play direction	The children attempt to affect the unfolding instantiation by suggesting an alternative action	Pretend you forgot it.
Role-play props	The children explore the props provided in the role-play area	What's a cross?

Secondly, the frequency of the stages suggests that they are integral to the role-play interaction. Table 20 presents the findings concerning the number of times the regulative stages occur across the different scenarios types.

Table 20 Initiation of regulative stages by scenario type

Scenario	Role-suggestion	Role-play direction	Role-play props
Baby clinic	12	6	10
Vets	8	4	2
Pet shop	2	10	4
Shoe shop	11	2	0
Cafe	17	6	1
Total	50	28	17

The findings suggest that certain social encounters depend more heavily on these regulative stages in order to support the unfolding scenario. For example, in the pet shop there are the greatest number of directing stages. This finding implies that the in-role stages were not enough on their own to motivate the in-role stages. The reason for this might be due to the children's limited understanding of this particular social scenario,

which in turn has implications for teaching and I discuss this in more detail in Section 5.3.1. There are more 'props' stages in the baby clinic compared with the other scenarios and fewer in the vets, although the same play equipment is present.

The third point concerns the finding that the stages' identifiable functions and linguistic patterns span the dataset irrespective of whether the interaction has been coded as a Clinician Consultation or Service Encounter, or the specific scenario (i.e. pet shop). I turn now to present the details of the lexicogrammatical features of the regulative stages, and I present these features at this point in the discussion of the findings in order to draw attention to the way in which these stages are constructed through particular lexicogrammatical choices. I will build on these findings in Section 5.3 where I present the findings and discuss how the lexicogrammatical features influence and at points enable the unfolding in-role stages. In Chapter 6 I focus in detail on the lexicogrammatical choices of the in-role language.

The lexicogrammatical features of the regulative stages

In this section I present the findings of the lexicogrammatical features of the three regulative stages (role suggestion, role-play direction and role-play props) and discuss how these choices influence the in-role stages, and thereby the unfolding of the role-play.

i. Role-suggestion

The data analysis showed that all the individual role-plays pass through the stage of Role-suggestion at least once (except for SS-EYC1), suggesting that this stage is integral to the unfolding instantiation of the role-play. Table 21 shows the lexicogrammatical features and sample realisations of this stage.

Table 21 Linguistic realisation of Role-suggestion

Stage	Lexicogrammatical features	Sample realisations
Role-suggestion	Speech function: Command Mood: Declarative	You're the nurse (BC-EYC3) We're both cookers (HC-EYC2)
	Speech function: Command Mood: Imperative	Put that nurse one on (BC-EYM1) Pretend you're the customer (SS-EYC2)
	Speech function: Question Mood: Interrogative	Can I be the nurse? (BC-EYM3)
	Reference to dressing up clothes or props	You need a doctor costume (BC-EYM1)
	Use of professional name or role, or approximation of professional name	I'll be the vet (V-EYM1) I'm the casher (HC-EYM3)
	1st and 2nd person pronouns	As illustrated in the examples above

The stage is realised linguistically in a number of ways as shown by the examples in Table 21 above. An interesting finding is the way in which the speech function command is employed in Role-suggestion. The children assign and attempt to assign roles (although these assignments may be rejected) and this is achieved through commands realised through declaratives and imperatives (in 21 out of 50 instances), 'Pretend you're the customer'. A role proposal by a child for their own role is realised through declaratives, 'I'm the nurse'. While these instances have been coded as statements, it is possible that rather than simply giving information, as Torr and Simpson argue (2003), these declaratives may also be signalling a form of command rather than simply a statement.

Dressing up and being in some sort of costume (relevant only to the baby clinic, cafe and vet's) appears to assist the realisation of the Role-suggestion stage and the enactment of the imagined role. The other significant point is the use of the professional term for the

role or an approximation of the term. The extract presented in Table 22 below demonstrates the Role-suggestion stage.

Table 22 Role-suggestion in the baby clinic (BC-EYM3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
1	Melissa	*I be the nurse. I'm going to put this.* *You can be the person who gets the baby. Yeah?*	Melissa puts on the nurse's headwear Talking to Ishaan
2	Ishaan	*Yeah. I have a baby*	
3	Melissa	*And I'm the nurse*	
4	Jasmine	*I'm the doctor*	
5	Melissa (nurse)	*I am (the nurse)* **I got to write down the names**	Melissa is holding the clipboard
6	Ishaan (parent)	**The baby is called uhh...**	Looks to Jasmine and shrugs his shoulders as though he wants help thinking of a name
7	Jasmine (doctor)	**Check the baby because it's poorly**	

Melissa (turn 1) states her proposal as the nurse role. She turns to Ishaan and proposes his role as the parent and he accepts the role (turn 2), yet his role is only fully confirmed once he moves in-role (turn 6) to provide the name of his baby. Melissa again proposes her own role as the nurse (turn 3), and the two roles are established as Jasmine selects her own role as doctor. As the children move into the in-role stage (from turn 5), their roles are confirmed by their in-role dialogue. The nature of the speech function in the regulative stage appear significant. The children use statements to propose their own roles, and commands to propose others' roles. Melissa's statements (in turns 1 and 3) have a dual function; they assign herself as the nurse, and simultaneously a different role to the other children. Explicitly, she assigns the parent role to Ishaan (in turn 1). The

absence of modalisation in the declaratives, in turns 3, 4 and 5, suggests that the children present their statements and commands as non-negotiable and indeed none of the children challenge any proposal.

The extract highlights an important finding in that the regulative stages can be seen to blend into the in-role stages and the meanings are co-created by the children across these two types of stages. The establishment of the roles has been negotiated by the three children across a number of turns. The roles and the start of the role-play, have been enacted through the regulative language assisting the in-role language, and I return to this point in more detail in Section 5.3.3.

ii. Role-play direction

Role-play direction is the second regulative stage found in the data. During the role-plays, the children explicitly direct the unfolding scenario. The findings show that every role-play passes through this stage at some point. Table 23 illustrates examples of the different realisations through the children's lexicogrammatical choice of this stage.

Table 23 Linguistic realisation of the Role-play direction stage

Stage	Lexicogrammatical features	Sample realisations
Role-play direction	Speech function: Command Mood: Imperative	Pretend you bringed the dog (V-EYC1) Ring me on this phone (V-EYC1)
	Speech function: Command Mood: Declarative	You give money to me. (HC-EYC2)
	Modals – have to, need to	You have to write (PS-EYM3) You have to pay (HC-EYC2)
	Relational processes referring to the encounter type, key equipment or participants in the role-play area	This is another baby (BC-EYM3) This is my office (V-EYC1) It is a pet shop (V-EYM2)

Commands are important lexicogrammatical choices in realising the Role-play direction stage. Declaratives or imperatives functioning as commands occur in 19 instances out of 28. The commands direct the action and suggest that these utterances are non-negotiable as viewed by the speaker. A key element of this stage is the use of modality and in particular modulation, and the commands are further emphasised at times by the use of modulation in order to insist that the action be carried out.

iii. Discussion of role-play equipment

During the role-play interactions there are moments when the children effectively 'pause' the action in order to discuss some of the role-play equipment. While this stage does not contribute directly to the unfolding action, it is linked to the instantiation of the role-play instantiation by the fact that the piece of equipment or word once identified by the children, can then be incorporated directly into the encounter, or that in some way the exchange between the children makes something clear, that allows the role-play to continue. Table 24 presents the features of the stage and examples of realisations.

Table 24 Role-play props stage

Stage	Lexicogrammatical features	Sample realisations
Role-play props	Speech function: Question Mood: Interrogative	What's a cross? (BC-EYM1) Where's the stethoscope? (BC-EYM1) What is this for? (BC-EYC3)
	Speech function: Commands Mood: Imperatives	Look how far it goes. It goes even to this number. (BC-EYM1)
	References to the props	Wow a microscope (V-EYM1)

Questions realised as interrogatives are clearly linked to the 'here and now' of the role-play and reference the physical props. This choice occurs in 11 instances out of 17. Interrogatives are important as they open up possibilities for learning new lexical items and creating new meanings as I will discuss in Chapter 7. This particular stage highlights the interest generated by the realistic props.

In summary, the findings show that the three regulative stages are realised by lexicogrammatical choices that enable the children to propose imaginary roles, explicitly influence the unfolding role-play and explore the equipment in the role-play area. I will draw on the discussion of the functions and lexico-grammatical features of the regulative stages in Section 5.3.3, in particular where I discuss how they blend with the in-role stages to enable the progression or the instantiation of a new role-play.

5.3 The dynamic instantiation of classroom role-play: the unfolding of a social encounter through stages

I have so far presented findings that I argue demonstrate that the children's language interaction in classroom role-play can be conceptualised in terms of two types of stage, in-

role and regulative. In this section I will present findings that demonstrate three main claims. Firstly, that certain real life stages in the two types of social encounter are more likely to be construed together and can be seen to cluster. Secondly, that the children accommodate their emerging understanding of these social scenarios through strategies that span the five different scenarios. Thirdly, that the in-role and the regulative stages blend. In summary, this section highlights the interplay between the regulative and the in-role stages and shows how through these stages the children organise and thus co-create life-like scenarios in classroom role-play.

5.3.1 Clustering of in-role stages

In this section I present the findings that show that the children construe certain stages from the real life research in a particular order. Where these patterns are found, I describe this as a stage cluster. I will consider the clusters and what insights these findings bring to the understanding of classroom role-play. There are, as I have briefly highlighted, differences in the way in which the children instantiate the individual scenarios when compared to real life encounters. Furthermore as Table 15 showed, the children do not necessarily progress through a complete set of stages from beginning to end. The reiteration of stages found to be present in adult real life encounters (Ventola, 1987) is also present in the role-play data. Even with possible reiteration of stages there are patterns across the data where particular in-role stages cluster. That is to say that the children instantiate only certain stages in a particular order. This point can be exemplified using group EYC3 in Table 25, and their baby clinic role-play (although this also occurred at other points across the data) where the doctor and nurse can be seen to instantiate the first three stages, Stating/ eliciting the problem, through Diagnosing facts and finally Exposition. This is partially interrupted by some enhancing utterances, yet these do not derail the main goal of the encounter.

Table 25 Eliciting problem, diagnosing facts and exposition in the baby clinic (BC-EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage	Notes
3	Daniel (Doctor)	*Yep, you have to write it. I'll be the doctor*	Regulative: Role suggestion	
		What's the matter?	In-role: Stating/ eliciting problem	
4	Yusra (nurse)	**I writ, I writ 'the baby has infection.' The baby has infection. I writ that for you** **Where's your baby?**		Daniel looks at the paper and passes it back to Yusra Talking to Meggie
5	Meggie (parent)	**My baby is there**		Points to the doll
6	Yusra (nurse)	**Okay. Let me just see what's inside her. Do you mind seeing what's inside his throat with that, it's a light?**	In-role: Diagnosing Facts	Passes the instrument for looking in ears to Daniel
7	Meggie (parent)	**Is it okay if I call someone else? My friend**	In-role: enhancing	This utterance initiates a phone call
8	Daniel (doctor)	**Oh, your baby has to stay here for a while coz her heart's not beating properly.**	In-role: Exposition	Talking to Meggie

The data show that the linguistic realisation of certain stages creates momentum for subsequent stages. The Stating/ Eliciting Problem stage (the first stage of the cluster) is realised by an interrogative (from the doctor or vet) or declarative (from the parent or pet owner). The stage thus opens up the space for a response from another role and the subsequent progression to the Diagnosing facts stage. In the baby clinic and the vet's (both analysed as Clinician Consultation), the stages highlighted are a regular pattern:

Stating/ eliciting problem ^ Diagnosing facts ^ Exposition ^ Treatment

The children in this baby clinic role-play do not move through all of the stages as identified by Tebble (1999) (albeit that almost all of the language in the recording was coded as the children speaking as one of the social roles), and the children do not conclude the consultation at any point in the recording, but they do instigate a new one (and I return to this point in Section 5.3.2).

However, it is not only in the Clinician Consultation that the data show patterns. For example, while Greetings were not initiated in the Clinician Consultation, in the Service Encounter the data show that this stage occurs, and that Greeting is blended with the Service bid which again is realised by questions opening up a dialogic space for a response. In the Service Encounter (the cafe, the pet shop and the shoe shop), the following pattern is found:

Greeting ^ Service Bid ^ Service

The emergent patterns in the two encounter types (i.e. the Clinician Consultation and the Service Encounter) suggest that the children have some awareness of the relationships between the stages and the roles that enable those stages. The appropriate use of interrogatives and responses in particular demonstrate that the children can be seen to negotiate meaning together as imaginary roles. This point can be exemplified in the group HC-EYM1 in the cafe in Table 26 below.

Table 26 Clustering of stages in the cafe (HC-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage	Notes
35	Nicole (cafe staff)	**Hello sir what would you like to eat?**	In-role: Greeting In-role: Service Bid	Holding the clipboard
36	Dylan (customer)	**Soup**	In-role: Service	Sitting at the table
37	Nicole (cafe staff)	**Sorry we don't have any soup**	In-role: Service Bid	
38	Dylan (customer)	**Bread**	In-role: Service	
39	Nicole (cafe staff)	**Bread, alright. You can only make your own sandwich. What would you like to drink sir? What would you like to drink?**	In-role: Service Bid	
40	Dylan (customer)	**Lemon juice, lemon juice**	In-role: Service	
41	Nicole (cafe staff)	**Alright, sorry we don't have any lemon juice**	In-role: Service Bid	
42	Dylan (customer)	**Cheese, more cheese**	In-role: Service	
43	Nicole (cafe staff)	**Alright lemon juice**		Nicole is writing
44	Dylan (customer)	*Now I'll be the waiter*	Regulative: Role Suggestion	
45	Nicole (cafe staff)	**Can we have some lemon juice please**	In-role: Service	Calls out to the 'kitchen'
56	Dylan (customer)	**The shop's closed**	In-role: Closing	

Group EYM1 in the cafe does not manage to progress their role-play through all the stages which Ventola (1987) suggests and in fact, while the language interaction is interesting in terms of the reiteration of the stages, the children do not move further than the Service stage at any point during the recording. However, the extract exemplifies the clustering of the three stages: Greeting^ Service bid ^ Service and implies that, for these children, these particular stages are indexical of the interaction. The stage clustering present provides an insight into why some of the role-plays may appear to be more 'in-role' than others or might be said to construe the social encounter more successfully.

Stage clustering highlights one way to identify stages that are more strongly or weakly developed. The stages that cluster, I suggest, are the most strongly developed and the absent, or less frequently instantiated stages are thereby those that are more weakly developed. By weakly developed I mean that these stages are less well understood by the children in terms of the expected goal and potential language choices. While a reiteration of the stages Service and Service bid would not be unusual in a real life encounter, the lack of progression, in this example, to goods handover, I suggest, provides some evidence that the absent stages of Resolution, Goods handover, Pay, Closing, and Goodbye (in Table 26) are those stages that are more weakly developed in terms of the real life scenario. The children's focus on the stronger stages suggests that these particular stages are the most comfortable for the children linguistically.

More weakly developed stages exist in both the encounter types: the Clinician Consultation and the Service Encounter. Through an analysis of genre stages, not only can we isolate the stages that are more developed (for example through the clusters of stages) but also the scenarios (i.e. the baby clinic or the vet's) that are better developed. In summary, stage clustering appears to indicate certain stages as more strongly developed than others, and I will explore how the children accommodate the absences of specific stages in the next section.

5.3.2 The children's accommodation of absent stages: the realisation of opening and closing the social encounters

This section will discuss the absent and more weakly developed stages, and how they are accommodated through strategies that the children employ to start, reinitiate, and close the role-play instantiations.

Opening stages

The data show that the children begin their role-plays with stages other than with the more expected openings such as a greeting that might be found more as an opening stage more typically in real life social encounters. The Greeting stage (as shown in Table 16 and Table 17), although present, does not align with the number of times the children play the social encounter during each recording (presented in Appendix IX). So a question arises about how the children begin and reinitiate the scenarios in the different instantiations. The analysis shows that in the Service Encounter, the stages of Service bid or Service, rather than Greeting, initiate or reinitiate the role-play with utterances such as: 'What would you like to eat? (HC-EYM1 Service) or 'Can you bake some chicken for my baby?' (HC-EYC3 Service bid). The reasons for this, I suggest, are threefold. Firstly it is possible this stage may be more familiar for the children as indexical of a Service Encounter. They will almost certainly all have been to a restaurant or cafe and heard adults placing a food or drinks order, or been in a shop where they will have heard similar utterances. Secondly, this stage is accompanied by some form of action, for instance in the cafe scenario, the children have to write down an order. The children, as mentioned earlier are encouraged to write down the orders and from observations are keen to use this resource (see Chapter 6). Thirdly the stage is realised by an interrogative that immediately opens a space for a dialogic interaction between the children. For instance in the Service bid stage, not only do the children engage in some form of action, in this case

writing, but the data show that the opening of the stage is realised linguistically almost exclusively by interrogatives. The interrogatives serve to open the dialogic space, and thereby a gradual unfolding of subsequent stages and the continuation of the construal of the encounter. To exemplify this point, in Table 26 above the waitress, Nicole, prompts Ryan, the customer, to respond and an exchange follows realised through a structure of an offer of Service by the waiting staff and response by the customer between turns 35-43. The finding implies that the children enjoy the dialogic interaction and understand a question – response type exchange to be integral to the social scenario.

Where the Service stage is the opening stage, this is instantiated by commands (by the customer to the waiting staff) and again realised mainly by interrogatives but with some declaratives and minor clauses that serve the same purpose to open up the dialogue and subsequent stages.

> Excuse me, can I have some carrot please? (HC EYC3)
>
> I want one pizza please (HC EYC2)
>
> Bananas with fish and chips (HC EYM1)

In the Clinician Consultations, the stages of Personal details, and Eliciting/ stating problem are closely tied to initiating the role-play. While serving a different function to the Service bid in the Service Encounter, the stage Personal details is also realised by interrogatives and opens up an exchange between the roles giving the children the possibility to use their writing skills (as in the Service Encounter). Personal details indicates the recontextualisation of the real life genre to encompass the nature of the social goal of this interaction, being part play (for the children) and learning (for the teachers).

The Eliciting/ stating problem stage is also instantiated questions, if initiated by one of the clinicians, or statements if uttered by the parent, which in turn prompts a response from the clinician, for example

Questions from clinicians:	What's the matter? (BC-EYC3)
	What's wrong with your baby? (BC-EYM1)
Statements from parents:	She's hungry always (BC-EYM1)
	I don't know how to hold a baby (BC-EYM3)

In the vet's, like the baby clinic, the Stating/ eliciting problem stage also initiates the role-plays. In addition, in this particular scenario, there are two occurrences of a new role-play starting with a Greeting and Stating/ eliciting problem immediately afterwards, for example:

Hello, my snake's not feeling well (Greeting ^ Stating problem)

In summary, although Greeting is used to initiate the role-play, it appears that it is the reiteration of certain other stages, and in particular those that offer the possibility of dialogue and that make use of other semiotic resources alongside the linguistic choices, that are key in initiating new role-plays.

At times the children begin new genre initiations without closing the one that is ongoing with stages typical of the real life encounters, and so the transition between one role-play and the re-initiation of the next has to be accommodated differently by the children than might be expected in a real life scenario. I now discuss how the children use the closing stages to shut down a role-play and create opportunities for a new instantiation.

The closing stages

In order for the children to play each role-play more than once (as shown in Appendix IX), they must in some way close down an encounter for a new role-play to begin. However, as already discussed the children do not necessarily move through to the closing stages as set out by the real life genre stages in Tebble (1999) and Ventola (1987). There are 26 Service Encounter role-plays (across the 15 different group recordings), but the closing stages of Closing and Goodbye occur only ten times by both the waiting staff and the customer, 'Thanks, here's your change' (HC EYC2), 'I'm getting down from the table I'm finished' (HC EYM1).

In the Clinician Consultation the final real life stages are the Conclusion and Farewell. In the baby clinic there are no instances of a farewell, but examples of the conclusion stage are, 'okay you have to go home, we'll take care of her', 'There you go. Book an appointment if you want to come again'. These findings suggest that the children therefore do not always conclude the scenarios in the way in which empirical research in real life shows: the end stages are omitted or occur less often. The role-plays can appear incomplete as they do not close in the way in which it might be expected in real life. Yet, the children initiate new role-plays and use a number of strategies to close a role-play without using the expected real life closing stage as I will go on to discuss now.

The absence of the expected final stages in the role-plays might suggest that the children do not have a secure understanding of how to finalise and close either the Service Encounter and Clinician Consultation, or perhaps that these stages are less interesting in terms of play, or less indexical of the scenario to them. I have already introduced the idea that certain stages are more strongly or weakly developed than others. It appears that the final stages are more weakly developed and as a result there is an impact in terms of the children's ability to push other stages forward and thereby close the scenarios. By way of example, in the cafe, there is one complete pay stage (EYC2) where the children

exchange money and return change and this creates the effect of concluding the role-play as the 'goal' of the Service Encounter has been completed. The next stage then begins a new instantiation of a role-play. A move through to the Pay stage occurs in other instantiations to close the role-play, for example in the pet shop, where the children move through a purchase stage where money is exchanged (EYM3). However when the children only attempt the Pay stage and are not able to complete it, the encounter continues with further reiterations of Service bid and Service, and the Pay stage attempt is ignored. For example, in the extract below (in Table 27), Daniel attempts to construe the Pay stage as the beginning of a conclusion to the scenario in the cafe. However, this stage is not taken up by either of the other children, and Yusra can be seen to either attempt to start a new role-play or to continue the existing one by placing another order in turn 45.

Table 27 Initiation of new scenario (HC-EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage
44	Daniel (cafe staff)	**Can you just pay some money for me?**	In-role: Pay
45	Yusra (customer)	**Excuse me can I have some carrot please?**	In-role Service

The Service stage, in this extract, is more strongly developed than the Pay stage and the unfolding play continues. The Pay stage is initiated fewer times than the Service stage, and is less developed than the Service stage.

A device to shut down an unfolding role-play to start a new role-play that is used in all five scenarios is one of the children suggesting that the shop, cafe, shop or clinic 'is closed' as exemplified by the selected utterances below:

> Baby clinic: Sorry it's closed now. It's closed. (BC-EYM1)

Cafe: It's closed now. It says closed (HC-EYC2)

Pet Shop: ...so it's going to be closed in half past minutes (PS-EYM3)

Shoe Shop: Oh it's closed (SS-EYC2)

Vet's: The pet shop is closed [although it is a vet's] (V-EYC2)

The device of closing the clinic, shop or cafe in this way is an effective approach in dealing with an unfolding role-play that appears, in some way to one of the children, to be unproductive or not progressing in the desired way. For instance, in the pet shop and the vets, the dialogue that precedes closing the shop or clinic is concerned with negotiating the roles. I suggest that this device is not an alternative or additional stage to those identified in the real life research, but a strategy for the closure of the encounter based on possible conflicting agendas of the children, and the accommodation of more weakly understood stages.

Further to the children's manipulation of the in-role stages in order to accommodate the more weakly developed stages, the regulative stages also at times play a part. The regulative stages aid the closure of a scenario overtly, for example, in the baby clinic (EYM1), an instantiation of an almost complete scenario comes to a conclusion where the children pass over a prescription. This particular stage is not strong enough on its own to completely close the role-play and it takes some assistance from the regulative stage of Role-play direction.

Table 28 Closing stages in the baby clinic (BC-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage	Notes
34	Nicole (nurse)	*There you go. Book an appointment if you want to come again.*	In-role:	Hands the paper (prescription) to Philip
		Pretend you forgot it.	Regulative: Direction	
35	Ryan (doctor)	**The baby's feeling better**	In-role:	
		Can you come again? Where's the stethoscope?	Regulative: Direction	
36	Nicole (nurse)	**Uh, here you go.**		
		Pretend you come again. *Pretend you come again.*	Regulative: Direction	
		Sorry it's closed now. It's closed.	In-role: closing	Nicole 'types' on the computer and then closes the curtains.
38	Ryan (doctor)	**Another baby's sick**	In-role: stating/ eliciting problem	
39	Nicole (nurse)	**What's the name? Hello.** **Another baby's sick**	In-role: Greeting Personal Details	

The turns 34, 35 and 36, and the regulative stage of Role-play direction, 'Pretend you come again' serves to encourage a new instantiation. This stage thus begins a new role-play and it is underlined by 'Sorry it's closed now. It's closed', in turn 36. The use of the command and then the statement provides little room for renegotiation and it is successful prompting the next child to use a Stating/ eliciting problem stage of 'Another baby's sick' to start a new instantiation of a scenario.

Another device that the children use to close the role-plays is to initiate the Role-suggestion stage. This strategy is seen in the cafe in particular. It appears that the children attempt to close down an unfolding role-play, in order to open up an opportunity for them to then renegotiate their roles. In the example below in Table 29 the children attempt the Pay stage unsuccessfully, and then Alex attempts to shift his role to that of the chef and Isla-Rose (turn 37) takes this opportunity to restart the role-play with 'Who wants some cheese?'

Table 29 Role-suggestion to restart a role-play (HC-EYC2)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage	Notes
32	Alfie (cafe staff)	*You have to pay*	In-role: Pay	
33	Alex	*Hey I'm the cooker*	Regulative: Role suggestion	
34	Alfie	*No I am*		
35	Alex	*No I am*		
36	Alfie	*No I am*		
37	Isla-Rose (cafe staff)	**Who wants some cheese?**	In-role: Service bid	Holds up some plastic cheese

In summary, there are common approaches across the scenarios that are employed to accommodate the children's emerging understanding of how these social scenarios would typically be closed and yet allow the play to continue.

5.3.3 Blending the in-role and regulative stages

In Section 5.2 I presented examples from the data to show that within the children's interaction there are two types of stage present: in-role and regulative. So far in this section (5.3) I have discussed and presented data to demonstrate how the in-role stages

cluster within the unfolding play, and the children's strategies to accommodate the stages that are not instantiated. I have drawn attention to some points in the data where the two types of stages can be seen to blend and through the use of further exemplifying data I will expand on this suggestion to argue that the in-role and regulative stages are part of the same unfolding role-play interaction; the in-role stages at times depends on the regulative stages in order to progress. It is thus through the use of these two types of stage that the imagined social encounter is organised and construed. I exemplify this point using the regulative Role-suggestion stage in a Service Encounter where in Table 30 Alex, Alfie and Isla-Rose are in the shoe shop.

Table 30 The blending of in-role and regulative stages (SS-EYC2)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Stage	Notes
6	Alex	*And pretend you were this now*	Regulative: Role suggestion	Talking to Alfie and passing him the till
7	Alfie (shop assistant)	**Do you want these shoes?**	In-role: Service Bid	Addresses Isla-Rose
8	Isla-Rose (customer)	**No thank you**		
9	Alex (customer)	*And pretend that I was another customer.*	Regulative: Role suggestion	
		I want to buy these	In-role: Service	Shows Alfie some football boots
10	Alfie (shop assistant)	**Football shoes?**		
11	Alex (customer)	**Yes**		
12	Isla-Rose (customer)	**I have to try these on**		Takes a pair of shoes to try on
13	Alex (customer)	**I am going to football tomorrow. I'm going to football now**		Talking to Alfie.

Alex, in this example, appears to suggest the role of shop assistant to Alfie (turn 6) by saying 'Pretend you were this now'. Alex is, at the same time, handing the till to Alfie, as a type of signal that the person who uses the till is also the shop assistant. The prop is, thereby a semiotic resource through which the children are signalling a Role-suggestion stage. In so doing, Alex is also positioning himself as the customer. Alfie agrees his role as shop assistant by accepting the till and addressing Isla-Rose as the customer, instigating the stage of Service bid (although Isla-Rose declines the pair of shoes offered). Having successfully placed Alfie as the shop assistant, Alex in the following turn then

requests the role of customer for himself and assumes that role immediately through his instigation of the Service stage. The role-play continues to unfold and Alex, through his negotiation of roles, has also made an impact on the unfolding scenario. The Role-suggestion stage has opened a space for the negotiation of the roles, but it is the take up from the children employing in-role stages that begins to instantiate the social encounter. Alex's further contribution to the construal of the scenario at turn 13 supports the stage (justifying his request for football boots), but it does not contribute directly to the 'social goal' of the encounter, i.e. buying football boots. Alex here provides the scenario with additional information that builds a more developed construal of the scene and highlights the children's creativity. This underlines the point that while the interaction is primed and themed by the teachers the intricate details are highly spontaneous, creative and motivated by the children.

The shift between the regulative stages of role suggestion, and the in-role stages that initiate the role-play instantiation, highlights a progression in development of the role. The initial request in the regulative stage by one child, is taken up by another (through their own role suggestion or acceptance) and then finally the confirmation of all roles takes place through the in-role stages. This link provides evidence of a strong relationship between the regulative and the in-role stages and I argue that these stages must be seen as an interwoven staged interaction. Table 31 supports this point with an example from EYC3 and their instantiation of the Baby Clinic. Daniel is dressing up in a doctor's costume (I will discuss the significance of the dressing up in Chapter 6) and this action is combined with his statement about his role.

Table 31 Speech Function and Role-Suggestion (BC-EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Speech function	Notes
1	Daniel	*I'm putting these on. I'm the doctor*	Statement	Daniel is putting on a doctor's costume
2	Yusra	*You're the doctor. I'm the nurse. Okay?*	Command	Yusra has the clipboard in her hand
3	Daniel (doctor)	*You have to write it. I'll be the doctor*	Command	Shows Daniel the writing
		What's the matter?		
4	Yusra (nurse)	**I wrote, the baby has infection. The baby has infection, I wrote that for you. Where's your baby?**		Links to a piece of writing
5	Meggie (parent)	**My baby is there**		
6	Yusra (nurse)	**Okay. Let me just see what's inside her. Do you mind seeing what's inside his throat?**		Passes an instrument to Daniel

In turn 1, Daniel's utterance has a dual purpose. It simultaneously proposes his own role and implicitly assigns other possible roles to the rest of the group. Yusra responds in turn 2 confirming Daniel's role, and her own, and in turn 3 Daniel continues to establish the roles through a command specifying something that Yusra as the nurse has to do. These two roles are then confirmed immediately by Daniel and Yusra in their initiation of the in-role stages and by the acceptance of the third member of the group as the parent with the sick baby. I will discuss the influence of the specific grammatical choices in more detail in

Chapter 6. However it is relevant here to highlight the impact of the speech function and choice of mood, as these have a direct influence on how the two types of stages blend. The commands realised by declaratives in turns 2 and 3 are powerful positioning utterances that are effective in gaining a coveted role. In contrast, role proposals or requests that are seen in the data realised by interrogatives are less effective than a declarative in terms of securing a role. The presence of an interrogative opens up a space for negotiation by inviting a response that may be rejected or at times ignored completely. This finding is exemplified in the baby clinic where in Table 32 Ishaan (EYM3) asks if he can be the doctor on six separate occasions and his request is flatly refused (as exemplified in lines 102, 104 and 106).

Table 32 Interrogatives in Role-suggestion (BC-EYM3)

Turn	Child	Utterance	Notes
101	Ishaan	*Now can I be the doctors please?*	
102	Melissa	*No. She put it on me. Check for one*	She – the researcher
103	Ishaan	*Can I be the doctor please?*	
104	Jasmine	*No*	
105	Ishaan	*Could I please be the doctor, Jasmine?*	
106	Jasmine	*No*	
107	Ishaan	*Why?*	

In Table 31 earlier, the stage of Role-suggestion could be seen to blend into the in-role stages through a stepped establishing of a role through the linguistic choices of statements and non-negotiable commands. In contrast, the interrogatives in Table 32 demonstrate that as a request the stage can be rejected where the speaker opens a space for negotiation.

5.3.4 Section Summary

Data extracts in this section have demonstrated the interplay between the regulative and in-role language stages. Some stages I have argued are more strongly developed and cluster together. The clustering stages are those which involve questions and responses and those that involve some form of action as part of the role-play. In cases where the children's understanding of stages is more weakly developed, they employ strategies and draw on the regulative stages to facilitate the progression of the role-play in order to close or initiate a new scenario. Furthermore I have shown that the stages blend to assist in the construal of the social scenario and the assigning of roles demonstrates the interwoven nature of the two types of stage.

5.4 Classroom role-play as an oral genre: a theoretical conceptualisation

This chapter has sought to provide a response to RQ1 concerning how classroom role-play is organised. Through the data and discussion I have proposed that the peer-led interaction of classroom role-play is organised through a number of stages. The stages I have suggested can be split into two distinct types, those that in some way are reminiscent of real life and those, the regulative that organise, manage and comment on the in-role language. The in-role stages, I have suggested, can be described by two types: i) stages that are similar to those that have been identified in research into similar real life encounters by Ventola (1987) and Tebble (1999) as discussed in Section 4.4.2, and Table 11, and ii) that of enhancing utterances. The enhancing utterances emulate real life in some way, but are not directly relevant to achieving the social goal of the main social scenario, for example buying shoes. While only some of these stages, the in-role,

are reminiscent of real life social encounters, all stages including the regulative stages contribute to the unfolding of the role-play.

Based on the findings that the in-role and regulative stages have different functions, and the differences in the way in which the two are linguistically realised (I present the detailed findings of the in-role stages in Chapter 6), I argue that the regulative and in-role language can be seen to instantiate two different contexts of situation (introduced in Section 3.4.1) within the same interaction (classroom role-play). These contexts can be described broadly against different field, tenor and mode (FTM) descriptions in Table 33. In Chapter 6 I will present the findings of the different patterns of lexicogrammatical choice against these FTM descriptions in-role.

Table 33 The regulative and in-role contexts

FTM	Regulative context	In-role-context	
		Clinician Consultation	**Service Encounter**
Field	The organisation and discussion around a role-play about a particular social scenario	A medical consultation with a clinician and either parent and sick baby (baby clinic) or pet owner and sick pet (vet's)	A Service Encounter to buy goods (pet shop/ shoe shop) or services (food in the cafe) with shop employees or waiting staff and customers.
Tenor	Informal peer level interaction between three children of 4-5 years	Formal hierarchical relationship between clinician and either parent or pet owner	Formal relationship between shop or cafe staff and customer
Mode	Channel: Face to face spoken interaction Role of language: Mainly constitutive but may at times be ancillary to ongoing play	Channel: Mainly face to face spoken interaction, but may include telephone calls and the exchange of written documents Role of language: Mainly ancillary	Channel: Mainly face to face spoken interaction with some written. Role of language: Mainly ancillary.

Building on the finding that classroom role-play is organised as a staged interaction, and that these stages instantiate two different contexts, one where the children are organising and talking about role-play, and one that is the role-play, I propose that these stage types, and contexts together instantiate a classroom role-play genre.

The proposal that children's classroom role-play is an oral genre is both a finding that emerged during the course of the data analysis and a theoretical framing against which I have presented the stage findings in this chapter. It is necessary at this point to theoretically locate the findings presented so far in this chapter, and to explicate the way in which I will continue to present the analysis in Chapter 6. I draw on existing genre

terminology (Martin, 1992), however, I propose a departure from the way in which genre has been employed so far in response to the complex nature of classroom role-play interaction. The classroom role-play genre model I propose is illustrated in the synoptic model in Figure 10: dependent dependant

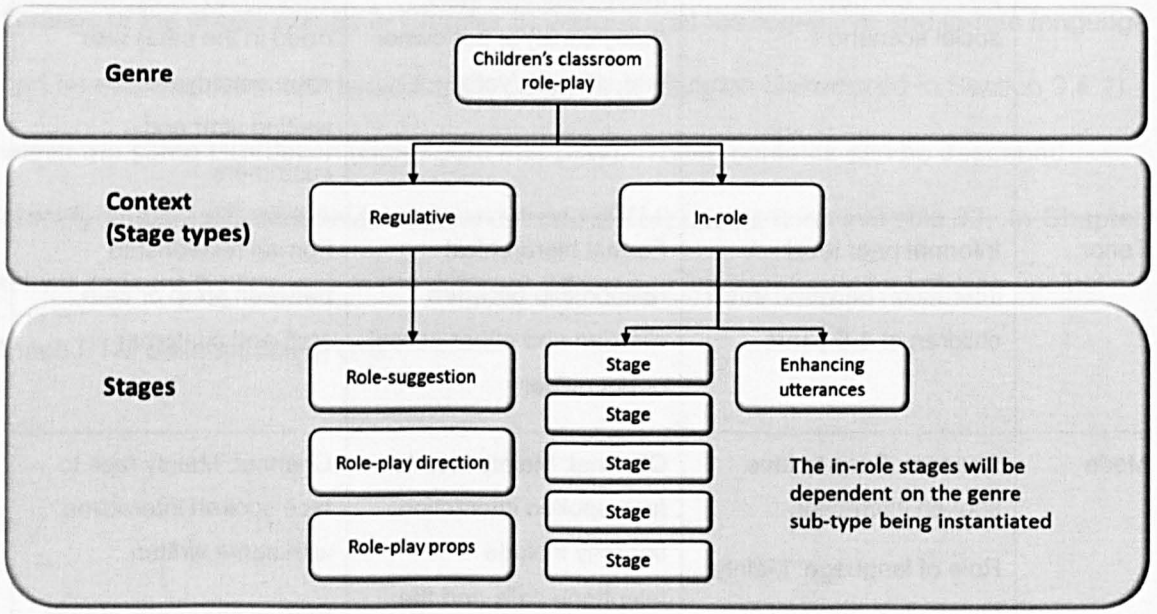
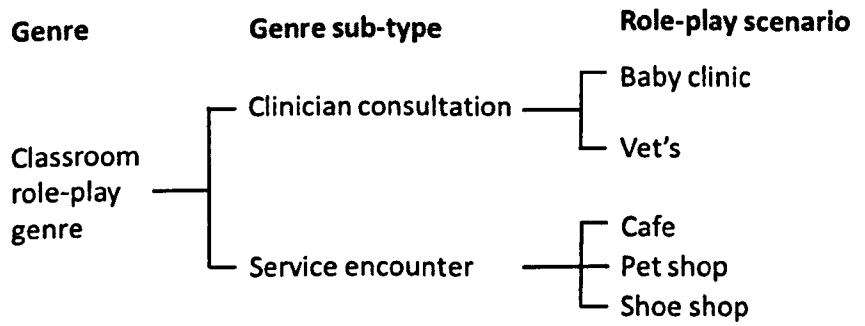


Figure 10 Classroom role-play: a genre

The figure proposes that within the genre of children's classroom role-play, there are two contexts realised by two stage types i) regulative and ii) in-role. Within each context there are recognisable and predictable stages. The three regulative stages identified from the data spanned the different individual instantiations of the role-plays and the different types of scenarios. The stages that comprised the in-role context were grouped as I discussed, into different stages depending on whether the children were playing a Service Encounter or a Clinician Consultation, and the differences associated with what I will term the genre sub-types, are not detailed in the model above. How the role-play scenarios align with the genre sub-types is shown in Figure 11.



Adapted from Coffin (2000:100) with data from my study
Figure 11 The genre and genre sub-type

The in-role stages distinguish the genre sub-type, yet together the in-role and the regulative stages are indexical of the classroom role-play genre. The enhancing utterances are optional and may or may not be present in a particular instantiation. The description of classroom role-play as a genre can firstly account both for the broad typical interactional patterns found within classroom role-play as a genre family. Secondly, it is a model within which genre sub-types can be aligned – in the case of this data, the Clinician Consultation and the Service Encounter - and finally, the same model provides a framework for the unique instantiations of each interaction.

While genre provides a useful lens to understand classroom role-play there must be flexibility within the lens to allow for the children's creativity so that it is not suggested that only role-play that fits within specified stages (from real life-sourced research) is of value. The enhancing utterances with further analysis would, I suspect, show their own genre stages, genre switching, or genre mixing (Ventola, 1987:84). There are undoubtedly other genre subtypes within the genre family of a classroom role-play genre, but these are not included in the present study.

In a discussion of the obligatory stages, or elements in a genre, Hasan (1985:61) suggests 'the appearance of all of these elements in a specific order corresponds to our perception of whether the text is complete or incomplete'. However, while there are

identifiable stages in the instantiation of the role-plays, my data shows that a stable flow from one stage to another is difficult to predict for reasons linked to the nature of the language interaction being spontaneous, oral, co-constructed by children and within a play context. It is worth noting that unpredictability of spoken genres has also been found in Ventola's work on spoken genres (Ventola, 1987). Hasan suggests (1985) that obligatory stages are genre defining but, by way of a challenge, Ventola (1987) found that the notion of obligatory stages was not always helpful and that certain stages may still be left out and the social goal still accomplished. Ventola's observations resonate with the spontaneous spoken interactions discussed in this thesis, and I argue that the more predictable flow of stages that may characterise other genres, particularly written genres (Martin, 1992), is not necessarily required here for the classroom role-play genre to be instantiated. Instead, I argue that the presence of regulative stages (which occur in all the role-plays across the data set), and the attempts or approximations of the in-role stages, provide enough evidence of the role-play genre being instantiated. Furthermore, the absence or partial approximation of stages provides information that can be used pedagogically and I discuss this point in Chapter 7.

5.5 Chapter 5 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to address the first part of RQ1:

> How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?
>
> a) How are role-plays organised

I have argued that, based on the data collected for this doctoral work, classroom role-play is organised as a staged interaction. I have argued that within the interaction there are two distinct types of stages. The mimicking of real life social scenarios is achieved firstly through the co-creation of stages that are reminiscent of stages in a real life social

encounter. Secondly the children make deliberate language choices that realise functional regulative stages that in turn assist the instantiation of the real life stages. The staged interaction, thus, inherits characteristics of similar real life social encounters, with stages nested within and around regulative stages.

The children's understanding of these social encounters is just emerging. The children are not doctors, shop assistants or parents, yet I have shown that they are able to instantiate and to cluster stages that are indexical of these real life genres through their dialogic exchange and engage with strategies to accommodate the stages in which they are less familiar.

I have extended the existing work on children's play conversations by Hoyte et al. (2014) and proposed that classroom role-play is an identifiable oral genre. Using extracts from the data I have demonstrated the children's ability to stage an interaction collaboratively on a shared social goal. I have argued that the interaction is largely predictable with interwoven stages that serve different functions. I have argued that the regulative and in-role language stages are together indexical of a classroom role-play genre. The lens of genre provides a different perspective on the understanding of classroom role-play. The presentation of the language data in a series of regulative and in-role stages has illuminated the way in which classroom role-play is organised.

There is however further insight that can be shed on the complex meanings that are made that construe the social encounter. To do this, in Chapter 6 I foreground the in-role language and consider the lexicogrammatical choices the children make when speaking in-role and how these choices influence the realisation of the individual in-role stages and ensure the role-play is reminiscent of a real life social scenario.

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6 The influence of registerial choices on classroom role-play

6.1 Introduction

Having argued, in the first part of Chapter 5, that classroom role-play is a staged interaction, I proposed in Section 5.4 that the children's interaction can be explained through the notion of genre. I suggested a classroom role-play genre is comprised of two different types of stage: the in-role stages and the regulative stages. Furthermore, I suggested that these stages construe different contexts, the first in which a role-play is being organised or managed, and the second in which the role-play is instantiated. In this chapter I now sharpen the focus of the analysis to focus in greater detail on the lexicogrammatical and other semiotic resources (as registerial choices) that realise the stages of the in-role language context. In so doing I offer a response to RQ1 b) How do lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices influence role-play?

While I argue that classroom role-play is a dynamic language interaction, the discussion in this chapter presents a more synoptic view in order to reveal the delicate language choices that realise the in-role stages and thereby 'transport' the children from their classroom into their role-play. I draw selectively from the register analysis (as discussed in Section 4.4.1 and presented fully in Appendix XII) of the in-role stages to show how the children's meaning-making in classroom role-play is a sophisticated blend of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings.

I present quantitative percentages and frequencies and these are drawn selectively from Table 66 to Table 80 in Appendix XIV (see Appendix XIII for an explanation of the way in

which the quantitative findings are presented). In order to highlight the in-role language I draw on findings of both the in-role and regulative clause level analyses. The initial comparisons serve to foreground the differences between the two emerging contexts realised by different patterns of lexicogrammatical choice. The contexts of the two types of social encounter were shown in Table 33, Section 5.4, and the patterns of meaning and can be seen across the two contexts and within the individual stages that instantiate the contexts. While ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings are created simultaneously, I organise this chapter by the register variables of field, tenor and mode to illuminate how the children draw on language and other semiotic resources.

6.2 The in-role language context: Field, Tenor and Mode choices

In Chapter 2, I discussed research that has found that a child's language in role-play displays register features including lexical and syntactic choices that are associated with the enacted role. I suggested that using register as conceptualised within SFL would allow a more fine-grained articulation of the linguistic and other semiotic resources that realise the register description. I now focus on the registerial choices (as conceptualised within SFL) of the in-role context and the individual stages, drawing attention to points of comparison between the in-role and regulative contexts where relevant. The qualitative analysis draws on the quantitative findings that are presented in full in Table 66 to Table 80 in Appendix XIV

6.2.1 Construing the Field

Field, as first discussed in Section 4.4.1, conceptualises what is going on in an interaction. I begin by exploring how the children construe the fields of the different social scenarios where the children are speaking as an imagined role.

The findings showed that throughout the in-role contexts of the five different social scenarios (baby clinic, vet's, cafe, pet shop, shoe shop), the children employed field appropriate terms evoking technical or specialist vocabulary relevant to the social scenario. This feature of children's role-play language is highlighted in the literature (for example Sachs et al., 1985) as discussed in Chapter 2. However, based on my data, I propose that it is not simply field appropriate terms that assist the construal of the scenario, but also by the appropriate processes that are used in conjunction. Some examples from across the role-play scenarios in the children's language data are presented in Table 34.

Table 34 Field appropriate lexical items

Genre sub-type	Scenario	Lexical items (number of instances in-role)	
Clinician Consultation	The baby clinic	Doctor (26), baby (48), tummy (13), bandage (9), nurse (5), blood (5), sick/ sickie (5) medicine (4), stethoscope (1), infection (2), poorly (1), heart (2), pain (1), temperature (1)	to check (17), to measure (10), to book an appointment (1)
	The vet's	Dog/ doggie (19), poorly (19), bandage (10), rabbit (3), snake, vet (7), heart (11), medicine (13), sore, injection (4), temperature (2)	to check (14), to measure (2), to grow (3), to die (6)
Service Encounter	The shoe shop	Expensive (4), shoes (52), handbag, size (24), football boots (5), plimsolls (2), money (10)	to fit (75), to try (43), to pay (9), to wear (7)
	The cafe	soup (30) milk (12), vegetable(s) (8), tea (7), salad (7), menu (4) chicken (4), hungry (1), bowl (3), sugar (2), knife (1), broccoli (1)	to want (53), to like (32), to pay (8), to eat (14)
	The pet shop	dog/ doggie (62), rabbit (20), pet (12), cage (13), parrot (8), expensive (8), puppy (8), shop (6), bone (6), lead (3)	to want (24),to buy (23), to like (8), to pay (5)

The data in Table 34 above demonstrates that the children in these social scenarios select quite specific lexical items. Furthermore, the lexical items are linked to the social scenario, for instance, the baby clinic or cafe, and to the broader genre sub-types of Clinician Consultation and Service Encounter, for example, 'to check' appears in both the baby clinic and the vet's and 'to pay' appears in the shoe shop, the cafe and the pet shop.

While I argue that the field specific lexical items assist in construing the in-role context they are not confined to the in-role context, but also found in the regulative context. This may appear contradictory and the reason these items appear in both contexts is three-

fold. Firstly, technical nouns, such as 'microscope' in the baby clinic appear in the regulative stages as part of discussions about the props (and I discuss this further in Chapter 7). Secondly, other less technical but still relevant lexis, such as 'ketchup' in the cafe appear as the children search for props. Thirdly, items are included in the regulative stages in order to affect the ongoing play in some way and reference is made to the props, the dressing up clothes, roles and so on. The finding that technical items appear in both contexts supports my earlier claim that the construal of the field is more complex than being able to use particular technical terms arbitrarily. The children use the field-specific lexis by deploying it in combination with appropriate clause configurations which I will discuss now in relation to processes and participants, and in Section 6.2.2 below.

Process choice is the second element of focus in field. I present the complete findings of the clause level process choice across the in-role and regulative contexts in Table 66 in Appendix XIV. Using these findings, I focus on the children's selection of material, relational and mental processes specifically and on how the children's language choices, together with the technical lexemes, influence the role-plays. I will argue that the language data show that the children represent and construe their play world using appropriate participants and processes to actively build the field of the social encounter. For example, a simple statement in the baby clinic of the type: 'I need to check his heart' (BC-EYC3), shows a material processes denoting some form of specific action associated with a doctor. It presents the actor of the statement as the speaker (the doctor) with the goal of the action being the baby's heart.

Material and relational processes are used the most in both the regulative and the in-role language contexts. The frequency of material processes between the in-role (33%) and regulative (34%) contexts is very similar, but when exploring the language data qualitatively it appears that the functions of the processes, that is how they are being used, are different. The children select material processes in the in-role stages to

construe what is happening at that particular moment as a type of commentary to the ongoing action, 'I writ the baby has infection' (BC-EYC3); 'Sorry Mum, I can't find a phone' (V-EYC1). In contrast, in the regulative stages material processes relate to the direction of the unfolding scenario, for example, 'you have to pay' (HC-EYC2)'; 'you have to measure the dog' (PS -EYM2). The children set out what action needs to take place in order for the role-play to unfold along the lines of what the children want.

A difference in the frequencies of relational processes between the two contexts (37% in-role and 45% in the regulative context) can be explained in part by the differences in the functional aspects of the stages. In the regulative stages (where there are more relational processes) the children's language organises the role-play specifically and appears to be more reliant on relational processes to express, essentially, a relationship between two concepts, for example, in requesting and suggesting roles, 'I'm the doctor' (BC-EYC3), 'You have to be the waiter' (HC-EYC2). The regulative stage of role-play props also uses relational processes in order to discuss the role-play equipment, 'it's a mixer' (BC-EYM1). This is in contrast to in-role where the relational processes have different functions depending on the social scenario of the role-play and the stage type. In the baby clinic, relational processes describe the baby: 'Her temperature is about that high' (BC-EYC3); 'Poorly, it's called Poorly' (BC EYM3). In the vet's, the relational processes are used to describe the pet and the discussion of the treatment: 'What is the name of your cat? (EYM1); 'This is its temperature' (V-EYM1). In the cafe, it is a description of 'having' something to eat 'you can have a carrot' (EYC2); "we haven't got porridge' (HC-EYC2). In the pet shop the relational processes combine with interrogatives to request a pet: 'Please can I have a big dog?' (PS-EYM2). In the shoe shop the relational processes are in the main the use of 'to fit' 'They nearly fit me' (EYC3). What is clear from these findings is that the selection of a particular process type enables and distinguishes the stage and the context.

Mental processes, though not used as frequently as material and relational processes, are particularly interesting in the children's role-play data. There is only a small difference in the percentage use of mental processes between the in-role (10%) and regulative (11%) contexts. However, when considering the choices of mental processes, there are differences between the different role-play scenarios. For instance, in the Service Encounter, stages are construed with processes such as 'to like' and 'to want'. In the Clinician Consultation however processes such as 'to hurt' and 'to feel' appear. In the regulative context 'to pretend' occurs 21 times (or 25%). The use of pretend illustrates very clearly how quite specific mental processes (as I will show in more detail in conjunction with particular grammatical constructions) assist in the construal of the two contexts. Pretend is used by the children to affect the unfolding play, and at times to alter the direction of the play. This point is exemplified in the extract in Table 35 where the children are in the pet shop and Ryan attempts to change the role-play to a vet's.

Table 35 'Pretend we're playing vet's' (PS-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
29	Ryan (vet)	*Pretend the doggie was really poorly. Pretend we're playing vet's.*	Pretending the dog is ill and taking its temperature.
		This dog she's got very hot she got really hot, she's got one hundred	
30	Nicole	**That means you have to take her to the doctor**	
		Hello	
31	Phillip	A vet is an animal doctor	
32	Nicole	*That's not medicine*	
33	Phillip	A vet is an animal doctor	
34	Nicole	*I'm a vet*	

So far in this section I have shown that the use of technical or field appropriate choices and the use of functionally relevant and appropriate processes influence the role-plays by instantiating differences in the two contexts and individual scenarios. However, as discussed in Chapter 5, the children do more than utter field appropriate but disconnected utterances; they organise the unfolding text in a series of stages. The stages are realised in part through these deliberate selections which construe the field. I now present the findings of the field choices relating explicitly to the realisation of stages.

Analysis of register in SFL terms offers the possibility to draw attention to how lexicogrammatical choices construe particular stages successfully.
Table 36 below (drawn from the register analysis presented in Appendix XII) highlights three stages in the Clinician Consultation: Stating/ eliciting problem; Diagnosing facts; Stating resolution/ exposition. It shows how the choices of particular processes and participants contribute to the different stages.

Table 36 Building the field in the Clinician Consultation

Stage	Analysis	Sample utterances
Stating/ eliciting problem	People and pets as participants	What's wrong with your baby? (BC-EYM1)
	Relational processes	This dog has been poorly (V-EYC2)
	Mental processes construing health problems	My snake's not feeling well (V-EYM1)
Diagnosing facts	People as participants	I need to measure her (BC-EYM1)
	Body parts as the goal	I need to check his heart (V-EYC2)
	Relational processes	The baby is 14 long (BC-EYCM1)
Stating resolution/ exposition	Pronouns as participants referring to the baby, the pet.	She has her tummy rumbling (BC-EYM1)
	Relational processes	His ear's sore (V-EYM1)

The Stating/ eliciting problem stage is construed mainly through relational and mental processes. The mental processes are concerned with the expression of the health problem of the pet or baby by the owner or parent. The participants of the stage are the pets, or the people involved in the interaction who are expressed as personal pronouns. Diagnosing facts is the stage that follows, and again the participants are the people involved in the interaction also represented by personal pronouns, or the baby. In this stage the processes construe the action of the diagnosis through material processes, and through relational processes that construe the health of the baby or pet. The relational processes construe the presentation of the diagnosis.

The language data from the Service Encounter show findings that are comparable to those of the Clinician Consultation in that the children can be seen to draw on ideational resources that successfully build the field, and realise and distinguish the separate stages. In Table 37 below I again draw out the salient aspects of the findings from the register

analysis for the Service Encounter (Appendix XII) and consider the stages: Service Bid; Service; Goods handover.

Table 37 Building the field in the Service Encounter

Stage	Analysis	Example utterances
Service Bid	Mental processes construe the needs of the customer	What do you want customer? (SS-EYC3) What would you like to eat Sir? (HC-EYM1)
	Field appropriate lexemes	What about these sparkly shoes? (SS-EYC2)
Service	People as participants realised as personal pronouns	I need some dog food (PS-EYM2)
	An utterance comprised of two processes, mental and material processes (analysed as two separate clauses see Section 4.4.1 for explanation of coding)	I want to buy some more shoes (SS-EYC2)
	Field appropriate lexemes	Can you bake some chicken for my baby? (HC-EYC3)
Goods handover	Processes are: Existential, Relational, Material	 There's two sandwiches (HC-EYC2) Can I have my dog now (PS-EYM2) You take those, here you go (SS-EYC3)
	Field appropriate lexemes	Here's the coffee and here's the milk for the baby (HC-EYM1)

In the three stages presented above, mental processes are highlighted as particularly salient. The customer and the cafe or shop staff must communicate what is 'wanted'. This is in contrast to the Clinician Consultation where metal processes construe a 'feeling' of being unwell. Material processes in the cafe highlight the action of the interaction, which is cooking or preparing some food. In the shop situations, the lexical choices reflect

the items to be bought, the pets, the pet equipment or the shoe types and thereby the field of the individual genre stages of the Service Encounter.

The findings of the in-role stages presented in Table 36 and Table 37 above, drawn from the register analysis, reveal that the different in-role stages are realised by choices of different patterns of participants, processes and field specific lexical choices. For example, the Diagnosing facts stage highlights the doctor or vet as actor, whereas the Stating/ resolution stage shows the baby or the pet as the participant. Different process choices encode actions to be carried out in the two genre sub-types, I'm going to buy a different lead' (PS-EYM3), 'Can you bake some chicken for my baby?' (HC-EYC3) whereas in the Clinician Consultation the action required is very different 'I need to measure her' (BC-EYC2), 'Shall I just take its temperature?' (V-EYC1).

I now build on these findings in Field, and draw explicit attention to the differences in grammatical constructions and other aspects of Tenor in Section 6.2.2 below.

6.2.2 Managing Tenor

The findings presented above show how the children are able to construct field in quite deliberate ways to realise individual stages and in turn differentiated contexts between the genre sub-types. Technical lexical items were found in the data, yet it was the use of these particular items in combination with relevant processes which highlighted how the children construe different genre stages. I now build on the ideational aspect and explore the interpersonal meanings realised by tenor variables. I will argue that the interpersonal meanings are of key importance to the way in which the children construe the social scenario and operate simultaneously with the field choices discussed. Observations at an interpersonal level have been discussed in conjunction with technical terms in previous literature, focussing on children of 8-10 years (Hoyle, 1998) and 9 years (Blum-Kulka et

al., 2004). However, these studies identified language examples at a quite general level, for example 'When 'in character', both girls use a style of speech very different from their casual conversational style, ... the mixing of stock 'shop talk' phrases and formal language' (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004:316). Building on this work, I will consider the children's language choices across the different role-play scenario types, and demonstrate how the children's use of subtle lexicogrammatical choices of speech function, mood, interpersonal grammatical metaphor and modality influence the enacting of the social roles and contribute to variations in social roles, status and distance.

I will discuss the children's use of speech function and mood first in relation to how the children 'make things happen' in the role-plays. I then move to how the children more subtly develop social roles, distance and status through interpersonal grammatical metaphor, modality, and the management of information. For each section, I begin by presenting the findings of how the children instantiate the different contexts, and the individual stages of the two genre sub-types of Clinician Consultation and Service Encounter through choices of speech function and mood. I draw on the most salient of the quantitative findings from the tables in Appendix XIV that illuminate interesting and revealing language patterns.

The functional realisation of the regulative and in-role contexts, and the genre stages through speech function and mood

Grammatical constructions categorised within the systems of speech function and mood allow speakers to make things happen (as first discussed in Section 3.4.2 and Table 1), for example, to provide information, give a command, ask for information and so on. The precise grammatical construction a speaker choses to realise these speech functions can alter the meaning of the utterance considerably. However, first and foremost, the functional requirements of the exchange must be met, for example, the need to request

information, secondly how the request is realised has an impact on the interpersonal meanings. In this section I will discuss the findings of speech function and mood, and I consider the functional reasons for these particular language choices and the interpersonal impact. I begin by highlighting some differences between the findings across the in-role and regulative contexts to draw attention to the construal of the different contexts, before exploring the stages.

In terms of speech function there are some subtle differences as shown in Table 67 (in Appendix XIV) between the regulative and the in-role contexts. For example, when comparing the in-role context to the regulative context (Table 67), the children use a smaller proportion of questions (14% compared to 17%) and a smaller proportion of commands (18% compared with 20%). This finding can be explained in part by the functions of the regulative stages, and the overall goal of the regulative context as set out earlier in Table 19. In the regulative context more requests for information are necessary to gain information relating to the roles, for example, 'What does the vet need?' (V-EYM1), and the equipment, 'Do you know what's this?' (BC-EYC3) and so on. The greater number of commands in the regulative context highlights the eagerness of the children to direct the ongoing action 'You have to pay' (HC-EYM3). I will discuss first the functions of some of the stages, and consider how the grammatical constructions enable what needs to happen in those stages.

In order for a role-play to be reminiscent of a real life scenario, the children must construct a number of stages with the aim of realising an expected 'social goal'. As a consequence, to realise the 'social goal' the children must initiate some form of appropriate action, and the ability to construe distinct parts of an interaction through speech functions (be that an exchange of information or goods and services) is necessary to enable the progression of the text. Table 38 below presents four stages, from the Clinician Consultation, with the speech function, mood choices and sample utterances. The complete quantitative

findings from the mood and speech function analysis of the stage initiations for each stage are presented in Table 69 and Table 70 (Appendix XIV).

Table 38 Speech function and Mood in the Clinician Consultation initiation of stages

In-role stage	Speech function and mood	Sample utterances
Personal details	Questions realised as interrogatives requesting information.	What's her name? (BC-EYM1)
	Statements realised as declaratives	I've got to write down the names (BC-EYM3)
Stating/ eliciting problem	Questions realised as interrogatives requesting information.	What's the matter? (BC EYC3)
	Statements (responses) realised as declaratives by the parent/ pet owner giving information	I don't know how to hold a baby (BC EYM3)
Diagnosing facts	Statements realised as declaratives	The baby is 14 long (BC-EYCM1)
	Interrogatives	Now shall I check your baby? (BC-EYM1)
	Commands as imperatives with 'let me'.	Let me just see what's inside her (BC-EYC3)
	Modulation	I need to check his heart (V EYC2)
Stating resolution/ exposition	Statements realised by declaratives	She has her tummy rumbling (BC-EYM1)

The function of the Personal details stage is to gain information about the sick baby or pet. The findings show that this stage is realised primarily by questions (11 instances out of 15), and some statements (3 instances out of 15). The clinicians realise their questions

congruently by interrogatives to gain information about the sick baby or pet, 'What's her baby's name?' (BC-EYC3). The statements are realised by declaratives in anticipation of the information that the clinician is expecting, for example 'I've got to write down the names' (BC-EYM3). The complete quantitative findings from the stage initiations mood and speech function analysis for each stage are presented in Table 69 and Table 70 Appendix XIII.

The Stating/ eliciting problem stage is instantiated mainly through statements (9 instances out of 14), with some questions (5 instances out of 14). Where the stage initiation is a statement these are spoken by the parent or pet owner, for example, 'This dog has been poorly' (V-EYC2). Where questions initiate the stage, they open up a short exchange between the clinician and the parent or pet owner, as the short extract in Table 39 exemplifies.

Table 39 Exchanging information: the Stating/ eliciting problem stage (BC-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Speech function	Mood
3	Nicole (nurse)	**What's wrong with your baby?**	Question	Interrogative
4	Philip (parent)	**She's um, she's very sick**	Response	Declarative
5	Nicole (nurse)	**What's wrong with her?**	Question	Interrogative
6	Philip (parent)	**I think, she's just, come out of my tummy and she's very sick because she's eaten loads and loads of food in my tummy**	Response	Declarative

The extract shows that the doctor requests information through a question realised as an interrogative, and the parent provides the response through statements realised by declaratives. This short exchange demonstrates how the children are co-constructing the

roles being enacted which is part of the construal of the unfolding role-play through this particular stage.

In the Diagnosing facts stage, the findings show a mixture of grammatical constructions, but mainly statements (15 instances out of 26). In this stage, where the clinician must ascertain the problem of the baby or pet, the realisation is through declaratives and the function is to give new information about a check that is about to happen or following a physical check of the pet or baby, for example, 'Okay, that's how much blood hers got, twenty' (BC-EYC3). These statements of 'facts' move on quite deliberately to the next stage of Resolution/ exposition which is instantiated by statements realised by declaratives, 'Oh, your baby has to stay here for a while 'cause her heart's not beating properly' (BC-EYC3).

In summary, the four stages discussed here from the genre sub-type of Clinician Consultation can be seen to be realised by different speech functions and mood choices depending on what the children need to make happen in the stage. The children's linguistic choices are enabling the enactment of the roles and the action of the individual stages.

Functionally appropriate constructions are found also in the genre sub-type of the Service Encounter and Table 40 presents three stages: Service bid, Service, and Goods handover.

Table 40 Speech function and mood in the Service Encounter stages

In-role stage	Speech function and mood	Sample utterances
Service bid	Questions realised as interrogatives	What do you want customer? (SS-EYC3)
	Offers realised as interrogatives	Does anyone want any soup? (HC-EYC2)
	Modalised interrogatives	What would you like to eat? (HC-EYM1)
	No mood	What about these sparkly shoes? (SS-EYC2)
Service	Commands realised by interrogatives	May I buy a rabbit? (PS-EM1) Can you bake some chicken for my baby? (HC-EYC3)
	Commands realised by declaratives	I want to buy some more shoes (SS-EYC2) I'm going to buy a different lead (PS-EYM3)
Goods handover	Offers realised as declaratives	There's two sandwiches (HC-EYC2) Here's the coffee and here's the milk for the baby (HC-EYM1)

In the Service bid stage the shop or cafe staff will request information. These requests for information are initiated often by questions (25 instances out of 41) or offers (9 instances out of 41) that are realised mainly by interrogatives, for example, 'Do you want broccoli?' (BC-EYC3). The questions allow the shop or cafe staff to gain the information needed in order to progress the order. The following stage, Service, is one in which the customer must not simply provide information but in essence command certain goods or services. In this stage the commands are realised by declaratives or interrogatives functioning as commands, and I will discuss the implication of these non-congruent choices in the section below. The Goods handover stage, where the food or the shop item is provided to

the customer, is instantiated by a statement realised by a declarative, 'Here's the coffee and here's the milk for the baby' (HC-EYM1).

In summary, the children differentiate their language choices based on the perceived functional requirements of the unfolding text, simultaneously construing the stages. In both the Clinician Consultation (Table 69) and the Service Encounter (Table 70) stages are realised by particular speech functions and appropriate mood constructions reflecting and construing what needs to be done in order to accomplish the stage and, depending on the stage, progress to the next stage. I suggest that this demonstrates strongly that the children have an emerging understanding of what needs to happen within different stages of these particular social scenarios, and importantly, how to collaboratively construct discrete stages that together work towards a shared social goal. I have shown that patterns of language choices can be seen at the level of the context (if the children are instantiating the in-role or the regulative contexts); the two different genre sub-types (Clinician Consultation and Service Encounter) and at the level of the stage to the overall progression of the unfolding text towards the social goal i.e. buying a pair of shoes. These findings add weight to the argument that a classroom role-play interaction can be conceptualised as a genre, as it can be seen that the children are construing stages and moving towards a particular social goal through quite specific grammatical constructions.

I have discussed here that while some stages are realised congruently, in others there is not always a congruent match between the speech function and mood. For instance the two stages of Service bid and Service discussed above are both realised by interrogatives that instantiate different speech functions. The Service stage is essentially a command where the customer must state their requirements, whilst the function of the Service bid is, in contrast, a question to gain information. I will now discuss these non-congruent matches and the implications on meaning.

Developing social role, status and distance through interpersonal metaphor, modality and information flow

Aspects of tenor such as the relative social roles, status and distance can be revealed through close attention to the way in which interpersonal grammatical metaphor, modality and who (as in which social role) initiates and manages the flow of information. In this section I will consider these aspects and the influence that the quite delicate linguistic choices have on the enactment of the roles and in turn the meaning-making in these role-plays. I continue to make reference at relevant points to the regulative context to highlight differences between the regulative and in-role language.

As discussed above, not only do the children perform different speech functions and select appropriate mood structures in relation to the functional goal of the stage, they also sometimes select different non-congruent mood structures. When the findings of questions and commands in speech function (Table 67) are compared with the findings of mood (Table 68) non-congruent choices are revealed. For example, the in-role context shows a larger proportion of interrogatives (19% compared with 15% in the regulative context), and a smaller proportion of imperatives (9% imperatives compared with 13% in the regulative context) compared with proportionally fewer questions and more commands. The implication of these findings is that there are non-congruent mood choices being made in the in-role context. In order to make these findings meaningful it is necessary to discuss them in relation to the function of the stages present in the Clinician Consultation and the Service Encounter.

Taking commands first, at the level of context in the regulative stages, a command is most likely to be realised through a congruent mood structure, an imperative. In the in-role stages, however commands are more likely to be realised by non-congruent structures and I will consider this in relation to who issues the commands and how these are realised.

The children employ different ways in which to realise commands simultaneously reflecting their own developing imagined role, and the relationship between this role and others in the interaction. In the baby clinic, commands are issued only by the doctors and nurses. This finding reveals a little about the children's understanding of the social expectations of the different roles. It suggests they understand parents in these social encounters to be less dominant, where they are not expected to issue commands in any form. This suggestion is evidenced in Table 71 (Appendix XIV) where the realisation of a command in-role is compared with the regulative context, i.e. when the children are speaking as themselves outside the role-play. The children in the regulative stages do use commands and these are realised as imperatives (61% of the time), rather than declaratives (31%) or interrogatives (7%). In-role, the doctors and nurses realise commands through imperatives (43%), interrogatives (15%) and declaratives (35%). The findings show that the child is more likely to employ interpersonal grammatical metaphor when playing a clinician, and realise the commands non-congruently as an interrogative or declarative, as is shown in the examples below:

> Could you please just put your baby on the scales? (BC-EYM3)

> Do you mind seeing what's inside his throat with that? (BC-EYC3)

The grammatical metaphor has the function of a command while simultaneously influencing the level of social distance and politeness between the roles of clinician (i.e. doctor and nurse) and that of the parent. In contrast, in the regulative stages, the realisations are more likely to be a more congruent imperative, as in, 'Take your nurse things' (BC-EYM1), or a declarative with, 'This baby has to be poorly as well' (BC-EYM3). While a declarative functioning as a command is also an instance of grammatical metaphor, interrogatives (seen in the in-role stages) are understood typically as more polite as they appear to leave more space for the addressee not to comply. As a result, this choice creates a more formal and hierarchical relationship.

In contrast to the lack of commands from the parent in the baby clinic, in the vet's, the pet owner does give commands (as shown in Table 72), and most (10 out of 11 instances) are expressed congruently, for example 'Take him to the vet now' (V-EYC1). However, these are instances where the pet owner is speaking to their 'family' and through the choice of mood, the social distance between the roles is affected. When the pet owner is speaking to the vet, an interpersonal grammatical metaphor is used, 'Doctor vet can you come at the doctors please coz we have a poorly very poorly dog and he's got a sad face' (V-EYC2). The vet, when issuing commands also uses imperatives but they can be seen to include typical politeness conventions softening the command and increasing the politeness, 'Be nice to him please because it's really poorly' (V-EYC1). Through a linguistic manipulation of the delicate aspects of grammar, the child construes a more polite and respectful role and is able to make a command but in ways that are more expected or appropriate for the social position of the vet. The child can be seen therefore to have altered their language choices in relation to their own and others' imagined social roles.

In the Service Encounters commands are also particularly interesting, and here I want to highlight the distribution between the social roles as the data show differences between the Service Encounter and the Clinician Consultation discussed above. Table 72 (Appendix XIV) shows that the distribution of the use of commands across the scenario types in the Service Encounter is more equal than in the Clinician Consultation. For example, of the commands used in the cafe 45% are issued by the customers, and 55% by the waiting staff. In the two shop scenarios, the shop assistants use a greater proportion of commands: 67% compared to 30% of customers in the shoe shop, and 58% compared to 31% of customers in the pet shop. When the language data are investigated to see how these commands are realised, it can be seen that while there are instances of interpersonal grammatical metaphor, more congruent forms are used, for example in the

cafe, 'Sit down' (HC-EYC2), 'I want a soft apple' (HCEYC3), and in the shoe shop, 'Try them on' (SS-EYC1). There are different ways to interpret these findings. Firstly, it might be that the children are less familiar with these genre stages and therefore employ more congruent and direct language to instantiate the stage. However, as it is likely that the children have experienced all of these types of scenario (other than possibly the pet shop), I suggest the findings imply that the children understand a different social distance between the roles than are present between the clinician and parent/ pet owner discussed in the section above, and furthermore, these understandings are reflected in their language choices. The findings also support the argument that the children enact and differentiate the imagined roles through their language choices.

In stages where the children use more congruent lexicogrammatical choices in contrast to perhaps in real life where interpersonal grammatical metaphor might be expected, I suggest that this implies that the stages are more difficult for the children to instantiate appropriately. This point is exemplified by the Pay stage in the Service Encounter. In this stage, the children realise commands through imperatives, 'Give me some money' (PS-EYM1) and declaratives. While a declarative might be seen as grammatical metaphor in the realisation of a command, the direct nature of the language choices, for example, 'Money please. I need some money' (SS-EYC3) and 'You have to pay' (HC-EYC2), suggests that the children have only an emerging understanding of how this particular stage is typically realised. The congruent realisations are reflected in the pay stage across the genre sub-type of the Service Encounter (cafe, pet shop and shoe shop). I discussed the more weakly developed stages in Chapter 5, and I develop this point from the perspective of learning in Chapter 7.

In summary, the discussion of interpersonal grammatical metaphor has highlighted that the children have an emerging understanding of different degrees of social status between roles, and an emerging understanding of how to manipulate their linguistic resources in

order to reflect this understanding and construe quite delicate perceptions of social distance. The result is that the imagined roles are differentiated according to social distance and status in part through the children's lexicogrammatical choices. In making contrasts between the language choices of the two genre sub-types, and between the language contexts, I have demonstrated that these choices are consistent across the scenarios. I turn now to the discussion of modality as this is another way in which interpersonal grammatical metaphor is expressed.

Modality

Modality allows speakers to make additional subtle meanings and adjust their level of commitment to a proposition or proposal (Thompson, 2014), as I first discussed in Section 3.4.2. Modality is divided between modalisation (for statements and questions) and modulation (for offers and commands). As I will show, the children's use of modality further distinguishes the in-role and regulative contexts, and contributes in understanding how differences in lexicogrammatical choice influence the way in which the different social roles are enacted in the role-plays.

Use of modality, at the level of the context, occurs proportionally more often in the in-role context (16%) compared with that of the regulative context (10%). Table 73 (Appendix XIV) shows the counts and percentages in the use of modality split by scenario type and by social role. In the Clinician Consultation, it can be seen that the clinicians (doctors, nurses and vets) employ modality more frequently than parents or pet owners (93% compared to 4%). In the Service Encounter, however, the distribution can be seen to be more equal between the roles (in the cafe staff 64% contrasted with customers 56%). These findings support the point I made above about the children's lexicogrammatical choice being used to signal relative social roles, status and distance. I will unpack this claim further by considering the use of modalisation (Table 74) and modulation (Table 75).

In both cases I consider the influence of these linguistic resources on the role-plays in relation to the social roles that are enacted.

Modalisation

Modalisation aligns with the speech functions of questions and statements and Table 74 shows the findings for the instances of modalisation across the different scenarios and the roles. The broad patterns align with the figures presented in the figures for the overall modality figures. The doctors use modalisation (in 98% of the instances) and these choices allow the children to speak with authority about the health of the baby, and set out the diagnosis and treatment with confidence, 'We need to get the blood from her tummy' (BC-EYC3). The four instances of modalisation from the parent are used in different ways to that of the clinician. Two instances are questions, one is asking for confirmation of the doctor's statement, 'So I need to stay here for a hundred sleeps?', and one is a projection of an imaginary friend, 'My friend was just calling but she said, I just have to go for a while'. These findings demonstrate that the language patterns, in terms of counts, need to be investigated at the level of the actual language choices to understand how the language is being used. The findings show that while the parent uses modalisation, the function of the language choice is different to that of the doctor, highlighting further differentiated roles.

The Service Encounter presents different findings to the Clinician Consultation. Firstly the distribution of modalisation between the different roles is more equal. In the cafe, the use of modalisation between the waiting staff and the customers is 70% and 30% respectively (acknowledging two members of cafe staff and one customer in each scenario). The customer statements are concerned with what is going to happen, 'Now I have to eat my pizza', whereas the shop staff, statements are directed to other staff and in the most part not the customer. The pet shop and the shoe shop scenarios are different again. In the

pet shop, the customer use of modality is much higher than in the shoe shop which is a result of one child repeating, 'What do I need for my dog?' a number of times throughout the scenario. Her utterance is closely influenced and appropriated from the teacher introductions (and I will discuss this in more detail in Chapter 7). The shop assistants in the shoe shop use modalisation to communicate with the customers, 'You need something bigger' (SS-EYC3) and 'You'll have to try one of these ones on' (SS-EYC3).

Another aspect of modalisation is the use of projection with the mental process 'I think...'. Projection, following Halliday (1994), is described by Torr (2000) as two related clauses whereby the second clause is 'projected' through the first as a mental process'. There are 10 instances of 'I think' across the corpus and this projection is used across the two genre sub-types and across the different roles.

> Customer: I think I'll need a cage (PS-EYM1)
>
> Doctor: Wow one is so heavy, it's a hundred metres I think (BC-EYM3)
>
> Vet: I think I need to put a bandage on him because he's feeling dizzy on his hands (V-EYC2)

Rather than reflecting hesitation or uncertainty, the use of 'I think' appears to enact a layer of characterisation. It seems that the children select the projection to enhance the role that they are playing, signalling a sense of authority in the statement. These findings suggest that the children are sensitive to their own role and their addressee as their linguistic choices reflect and construe both aspects of the characterisation.

Another expression of probability is also found in the shoe shop data. The children appear to recognise that trying on shoes does not mean they will fit, they only might fit. It is in fact irrelevant whether the shoes actually fit or not as this is an imaginary situation, but the use of the modalisation construes a context more reflective of real life as the extract below demonstrates in turns 43 and 47.

Table 41 Probability in the shoe shop (SS-EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
43	Yusra (customer)	**It might not fit me. They don't fit me they're too small. They don't fit me. They don't fit me.**	Trying the shoe on
44	Meggie (shop staff)	**Try these ones**	Offers different shoes
45	Yusra (customer)	**If they don't fit I'll have to try something else. They don't fit**	Tries on the shoes
46	Meggie (shop staff)	**You need something bigger. Give me that shoe.**	
47	Daniel (shop staff)	**Maybe these will fit. Maybe try these.**	Hand over another pair of shoes

Modulation

Modulation is aligned with offers and commands and occurs in all the scenario types (although there are only 4 instances in the vet's). Similar to modalisation, there are differences in the way in which the imagined social roles employ modulation. As I have already discussed, the realisation of commands is very interesting in the in-role context and the use of modulation contributes further to the instantiation of interpersonal grammatical metaphor. There is a contrast across the choices of modulation between the different roles, and the most striking contrast is in the baby clinic. Even given the fact that during the role-plays there were usually more clinicians than parents, Table 75 (Appendix XIV) demonstrates that doctors are more likely to use modality than any other role, and in the baby clinic specifically, it is only the doctors that use modulation. This finding implies that the doctors select modulation to assert authority in the interaction and suggests that the parent, in contrast, has little authority. As modulation is associated with commands, it is interesting that the doctor uses modulation in their commands to the nurse and vice versa, for example, 'you have to cut her tummy doctor' (BC-EYM1). The effect of

modulation asserts their authority over what has to happen, and it serves to remove any question of uncertainty about the action required by the addressee. It also further reduces the possibility of a negotiation by the other speaker, for example, 'you will have to stay here for a hundred sleeps' (BC-EYC3). However, modulation is not only used to strengthen the tone of the command but also to soften it. The children show that they are able to manipulate their linguistic resources to do both.

Could you please just put your baby on the scales (BC-EYM3)

Here the command from the doctor to the parent is softened by the modulation, retaining some formality and authority but with some heightened politeness.

The clinician through these structures asserts his or her authority over the proposition and thereby strengthens his or her own role and power in the relationship. Furthermore it changes the level of politeness between him or herself and the patient through the confident direction of what is going to happen and extends the social distance. The modulation provides a more assertive presence in the encounter, even though it does not always demand action and it assists in demonstrating a greater level of control in the exchange. The parent in contrast does not assert any authority over what is happening during the interaction and is seen therefore as a less powerful presence in the interaction.

In the cafe, the distribution of modulation between roles is more equal, although the customers are seen to use most. The waiting staff use modulation coupled with declaratives removing the possibility for negotiation, 'you have to pay'. However, customer choices realised by interrogatives, 'Can you bake some chicken for my baby?' (HC-EYM1), open the possibility of the request being denied.

So far I have discussed how the manipulation of speech function, mood and modality can be seen in the data to enhance aspects of the imagined social roles, status and distance. I turn now to present the findings to show aspects of initiating and managing the dialogic

information flow and consider how they are relevant to the way in which the children construe the roles and thus another way in which the imagined social roles are differentiated. I will look at the distribution of utterances by role and in particular at which role initiates the questions.

Distribution and management of utterances

The distribution and management of utterances by genre sub-type and role type are presented in Table 76 (Appendix XIV). As mentioned previously, in some of the role-plays certain roles were more heavily represented, for example by having a doctor and a nurse but only one parent, or two shop assistants yet only one customer. Yet, even allowing for this fact, the findings show that particular roles dominated the interactions. In the Clinician Consultations it is the clinician (the doctor, nurse or vet) that speaks 77.5% of the time, while the parent or pet owner speaks only 15% of the time. Across the Service Encounter, 60% of the utterances are spoken by the waiting staff or shop staff, and 33% by the customer. Given the unequal distribution of roles, the Service Encounter shows a more even distribution of utterances between the roles. These findings suggest again, that across different genre sub-types the children see certain roles as more dominant. They suggest that, for the children, for example, the role of parent or pet owner in a Clinician Consultation is expected to speak less than the role of clinician, whereas the social roles in a Service Encounter are more equal.

Further detailed analysis shows that questions are particularly interesting in the consideration of the distribution and management of information (Table 77, Appendix XIV). In the Clinician Consultation (the baby clinic and vet's), the clinicians ask proportionally more questions than the parents (93% compared to 7% in the baby clinic and 64% compared with 14% in the vet's). In asking questions, the clinicians position themselves to request information thereby controlling the topic and flow of the information.

The clinicians' questions probe for information about the baby or pet, 'What's wrong with your baby?' (BC-EYM1), 'What's wrong with your dog' (V-EYC2), and the capturing of personal details: 'Is she a girl or a boy?' (BC-EYM3), 'What's the name of your cat?' (V-EYM1). These requests for information realise particular stages (as discussed above), such as the Personal details or Stating/ eliciting problem stages. There might have been scope for parents to check for understanding or ask more questions and yet this does not happen; the parents or pet owners in contrast to the clinicians are the 'givers' of the information only.

The Service Encounter displays slightly different factors in terms of the distribution of utterances and in particular the use of questions. In the pet shop data, the figures are affected by one customer who asks significantly more questions than the comparable roles in the other scenarios. In the cafe, the waiting staff also ask proportionally more questions (82% compared to 12%) than the customers. These findings may be broadly representative of the flow of information and the distribution of questions in these types of social encounters. Another factor may also be the influence of more dominant children. However, what is interesting from the children's role-play data is that there are some notable differences between the language choices of the social roles, suggesting further that the children's language choices enact the roles they are playing and assist in the construal of the overall scenario.

6.2.3 Section summary on Tenor

The findings presented in this section have shown that linguistic resources that are associated with the register variable of tenor construe quite complex and delicate meanings in the in-role stages. These meanings perform two major actions in the role-plays. Firstly the children's linguistic choices of appropriate speech functions contribute to the instantiation of the individual stages of the in-role context functionally. The children

are able to make things happen, for example providing information or offering goods and services. Secondly, the way in which these speech functions are realised reveals a subtle view of the children's understanding of the social roles in these encounters and they enact the social roles at a greater degree of delicacy through construing status and social distance. I have shown that the children are able to do this through interpersonal grammatical metaphor and the way in which they manage the flow of the information. The analysis shows that the children understand what needs to happen and that they have an emerging understanding of how these things need to happen within the confines of the social expectations of the encounter. They are seen to select structures that are functional and at the same time forge complex relationships between the roles that involve positioning certain roles with higher social status, social distance and authority by interpersonal grammatical metaphor. These findings build on those presented in Section 6.2.1 on field regarding the way in which the lexicogrammatical choices influence the role-plays. I turn now to the children's use of different channels and semiotic resources in an analysis of mode that I will argue further supports the construal of the interpersonal and ideational meanings discussed so far.

6.2.4 Manipulating Mode

As highlighted in Chapter 4, the two aspects of mode that have been prioritised in this analysis are the channel of communication and the role of language. The former focuses on instances when a change of channel is instigated, while the latter involves exploring the way in which different semiotic resources may be used to create meaning alongside the verbal language, as discussed in Section 4.4.1. The decision to highlight these two particular aspects was driven by the children's engagement with the rich play resources in the school's role-play area. Moreover, when reviewing the videos, the equipment appeared to have some significance in the construal of the scenario. While this study holds language at its centre, the fact that other semiotic modes appeared to be

contributing to the construal of the different scenarios could not be ignored. These factors, including the argument highlighted in the literature review that realistic props (of the type found in the role-play area) can inhibit the creativity of the children fuelled a curiosity to understand if and how semiotic resources other than language might contribute to the meaning-making in these classroom role-plays. I therefore considered how changes of channel from a face to face spoken interaction, to using the telephone, a tannoy or writing, or semiotic resources other than language might assist in the construal of the scenario (as set out in Section 4.4.1)

- Semiotic resources:
    - Dressing up clothes (identified within the regulative context only)
    - The role-play equipment
- Channel:
    - The tannoy
    - The telephone
    - Pen and paper

While the use of the telephone, tannoy and written texts may be understood as involving a change in channel, these were also included in my consideration of the role of language as a semiotic resource. For example, if a child were speaking on the telephone, their utterances were coded as material action being present and language being ancillary, as they were considered to be simultaneously changing the channel and using other meaning-making resources in the role-play. In picking up the telephone, I argue the child is signalling some form of meaning-making in instigating a change of channel over and above their utterances in using this channel. I argue that in some cases it is the act of, for example, using the pencil and paper to write, not the actual written text that assists in the construal of meaning. This point is illustrated clearly by one child who, when about to start to write, said to the other children in the group:

> Wait a sec, let me write it. I'm just going to do zigzags because I can't write properly yet. (BC-EYM2)

Doing 'zigzags' was unproblematic for the children because it was the act of writing, not the output of that writing, which in this instance would construe particular meanings. This finding, while perhaps not surprising, is important as it demonstrates the children's willingness to engage in or mimic the writing practices that these scenarios present for the enhancement of these literacy activities. Classroom role-play provides children not only with opportunities to practise their emerging literacy skills, but in addition, opportunities to understand how certain social scenarios are accomplished though certain literacy practices (discussed in more detail in Chapter7). In relation directly to RQ1, I argue that the carrying out of these literacy practices within particular stages assists in the construal of the real life scenarios. The findings support Wohlwend's argument that 'play allows children to 'play the expert' in more complex literacy practices' (Wohlwend, 2011:13). That is to say the children believe that these semiotic resources assist in the construal of the scenario.

In the next section on the role of language, I will explore how the children draw on the semiotic resources other than language and instigate changes of channel in order to make particular meanings, which thereby assist in the construal of scenes supporting the ideational and interpersonal resources discussed in Sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 above.

Language and other semiotic meaning-making resources: the role of language in the role-play

With regards to the role of language, that is to say how language interacts with the other semiotic resources that have been analysed for this study (dressing up, the act of writing, speaking on the phone or over the tannoy, and the use of role-play equipment) there are some clear differences between the regulative and in-role language contexts. Table 78 (Appendix XIV) presents the findings for material action. In the in-role stages, the children use a form of material action (that is to say that language was ancillary to other meaning-

making resources) alongside language 77% of the time compared with, in the regulative stages, 57% of the time. The children used the props more when speaking in-role than when they were organising the role-play. This finding implies that the children not only engage with play equipment during the role-plays, but that as the equipment is being used 'in-role' the children draw some meaning from this, and see the equipment as culturally part of the social scenario that will enhance the construal of the scene. As highlighted above, specific semiotic resources were considered within the role-play interactions. Table 79 (Appendix XIV) shows what kinds of material actions were observed and how many clauses were accompanied with each. For instance, the children employed another form of semiotic resource in-role 77% of the time, of which the play toys (equipment) were used the most (82%), and then the writing equipment (12%), the telephone (4%) and the tannoy (2%). Table 42 below shows how the role of language differs in four of the individual stages in the Clinician Consultation.

Table 42 Role of language in the Clinician Consultation

Stage	**Role of language**	**Sample utterances**
Introductions	Mainly constitutive	Oh you've got two babies (BC-EYM3)
Personal details	Ancillary	I've got to write down the names (BC-EYM3) *(child holding clipboard)*
Stating/ eliciting problem	Mainly constitutive	What's the matter? (BC EYC3)
Diagnosing facts	Mainly ancillary	I need to measure her (BC EYM1) *(child holding measuring tape)*

In the Clinician Consultation, the role of language in Introductions is mainly constitutive, whereas in Personal details the role of language is ancillary to material action (in this stage writing). The Stating/ eliciting problem stage is mainly constitutive, whereas

Diagnosing facts, is mainly ancillary where the children use the role-play props to carry out weighing, measuring and so on. The role of language also has an impact in the Service Encounter where the children move from taking an order with the action of writing, through to making and presenting their peers with appropriate plastic food. While it would be possible, it is difficult to see how the construal of the individual stages and the role-play scenarios themselves would be as successful without the props available to the children, which they select appropriately for the individual stages and in the main part by the appropriate role, manipulating the role of language within and across the text as required by the particular stage being construed.

While the focus of this chapter has been on the semiotic resources that construe the in-role stages, it is important to highlight also one particularly relevant resource within the regulative stages: the dressing up clothes. The act of putting on dressing up clothes was coded as part of the regulative language and can be seen in the example below Table 43 (turn 1).

Table 43 Drawing on semiotic resources in the baby clinic (BC-EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
1	Daniel	*I'm putting these on. I'm the doctor*	Puts on the doctor's costume
2	Yusra	*You're the doctor. I'm the nurse. Okay?*	Yusra is holding the clipboard
3	Daniel (doctor)	*Yep, you have to write it. I'll be the doctor* **What's the matter?**	
4	Yusra (nurse)	**I writ, I writ 'the baby has infection' the baby has infection. I writ that for you.** **Where's your baby?**	Speaking to the doctor. Hands over the paper Speaking to the parent
5	Meggie (parent)	**My baby is there**	Points to the baby
6	Yusra (nurse)	**Okay. Let me just see what's inside her. Do you mind seeing what's inside his throat with that? It's a light.**	Speaking to Daniel. Holds out the light to Daniel

The use of the dressing up clothes is particularly relevant in the baby-clinic but also occurs in the cafe. In the short example above, the relevance to construal of the role (and aspects of tenor) is highlighted where Daniel puts on the doctor's costume. Alongside his utterance, 'I'm putting these on. I'm the doctor', the act of dressing up means that he is proposing himself as the doctor. Yusra in turn 2 agrees to his role, and proposes her own role as nurse and this utterance is assisted by her holding the clipboard. Their roles are then further cemented by the unfolding in-role dialogue and an action that is associated with those roles, namely that Yusra begins to write and then takes control of one of the props, a light, to hand to the doctor in turn 6.

This short example highlights the impact of the dressing up roles, the role-play equipment, both the doctor's equipment (the light) and the clipboard as further contributing to the role and scenario construal in BC-EYM1 and the other role-plays. It shows how the meaning

is created by a blend of the verbal language and the semiotic resources used alongside the language which enrich and assist the construal of the context of the baby clinic. Not only do the different resources support the action, but they further confirm the roles that the children have chosen or been assigned signalling how the register variable of mode works across field and tenor.

The data show changes in the role of language across different stages in the Service Encounter. Table 44 illustrates that the role of language contributes to the way in which the individual stage is construed.

Table 44 Role of language in the Service Encounter

Stage	**Role of language**	**Sample utterances**
Service Bid	Mainly ancillary	What about these sparkly shoes? (SS-EYC2)
Service	Mainly Constitutive	May I buy a rabbit? (PS-EYM1)
Goods handover	Ancillary	There's two sandwiches (HC-EYC2)
Pay	Constitutive	Is it 2p? (PS-EYM1)
	and ancillary	They are £1 dear (SS-EYC2)

Language works alongside the props in construing the stage Service bid where the children offer shoes, or use the pen and paper to capture an order. This is in some contrast to the following stage which is constructed by the customer and where the role of language (in this data) is mainly constitutive. While the findings do not show definitive differences between the stages in terms of role of language, the patterns highlight that the children employ the props where appropriate and in conjunction with language to strengthen the co-construction of the stages.

I turn now to discuss the change of channel and the way in which the children harness different channels to enhance the unfolding social encounter.

Change of channel

The predominant channel in the role-play is, unsurprisingly, a face to face oral interaction. At the level of the in-role and regulative contexts, throughout the regulative stages the channel is a spoken face to face interaction, but when the children are speaking in-role, this face to face channel is supplemented by other modes such as speaking on the telephone or over a tannoy or with pieces of writing representing a prescription, an order or a shopping list. While these resources were discussed above in terms of role of language, they are also considered in terms of their value in 'change of channel'. There are moments in the role-plays were the children instigate changes of channel in order to create meaning in various stages.

The way in which different channels are used appear to be influenced by three factors: the teacher introductions, the creativity of the children, and their understanding of the different stages in social encounters. In the Clinician Consultation there are differences between how channels are used. Table 80 (Appendix XIV) shows the number of clauses coded as a channel other than a face to face interaction. In the baby clinic there are writing activities where the children write out a prescription, detail the problems with the baby and write out the personal details of the baby on both paper and at the 'computer'. However, in the vet's, where you might expect similar activities, there are far fewer instances of writing on paper and none at the computer. At the baby clinic the children switch channels to speak on the telephone much more than in the vet's. The use of the tannoy was only possible when the till was in the role-play area, during all the Service Encounter scenes and the vet's. However, the tannoy is used in the shoe shop, but not the pet shop nor the cafe.

The fact that the children do change channel suggests that, over and above construing a 'realistic' scene, the children enjoy being creative and introducing a change of channel alongside the face to face interaction is one way that they can do this, as discussed in relation to the enhancing utterances in Section 5.2.1. A good example of this is shown in the extract in Table 45 below where during a baby clinic scenario, one of the children receives an emergency phone call.

Table 45 Change of channel (BC-EYM3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
107	Jasmine (doctor)	**Oh dear, somebody's calling. Oh no!**	Jasmine is speaking on the phone
		Yes, hello, emergency	
		Do you have a baby coming? Oh dear, we'll have to call for the doctor	
		Oh dear, there's my...	
		Okay	
108	Melissa (doctor)	**Okay**	
109	Jasmine (doctor)	**Somebody's calling**	Passes the phone to Melissa
		Someone's calling, it's Charlie	
110	Melissa (doctor)	**Poorly and Charlie, that's fine**	
111	Jasmine (doctor)	**Yes, there are two doctors and they can help you**	Jasmine is on the phone
		Um no, yes there is two doctors, really? There is really.	
		Okay, Charlie came afterwards	

The teacher introductions also influence different changes of channel (and I return to this point in Chapter 7). This claim can be exemplified by Rosie's use of the clipboard in Table 46 below. Rosie holds the clip-board and through her question 'Can I buy a pet please?' assumes the role of the customer. Although an adult might not make his or her shopping list while in a shop, the children have been told by the teacher that the customer must write down a list, and this is being appropriated clearly by Rosie. Rosie's role as customer is confirmed by Lucy's response to her request 'Yes you can buy a pet'.

Table 46 Buying a pet (PS-EYM2)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
1	Lucy (shop assistant)	**Hello**	On the phone
2	Rosie (customer)	**Hello**	Holding a clipboard
3	Lucy (shop assistant)	**Yes yes yes**	
4	Rosie (customer)	**Can I buy a pet please?**	Face to face interaction
5	Lucy (shop assistant)	**Yes you can buy a pet**	
6 – 12	The group	**other turns here**	
13	Rosie (customer)	**I need some dog food**	
14	Lucy	*Okay write that down*	Regulative stage

The act of writing the list can be seen here as integral to Rosie's role as the customer. Rosie's customer role has been enacted through her linguistic utterances and her use of other semiotic resources, in this case the clipboard and the act of writing a list. The act of writing as part of Rosie's role as customer is also acknowledged by the other children in

the group, for example Lucy, in turn 14, who confirms that Rosie is to write down 'dog food'. Rosie's shopping list is shown in Figure 12.

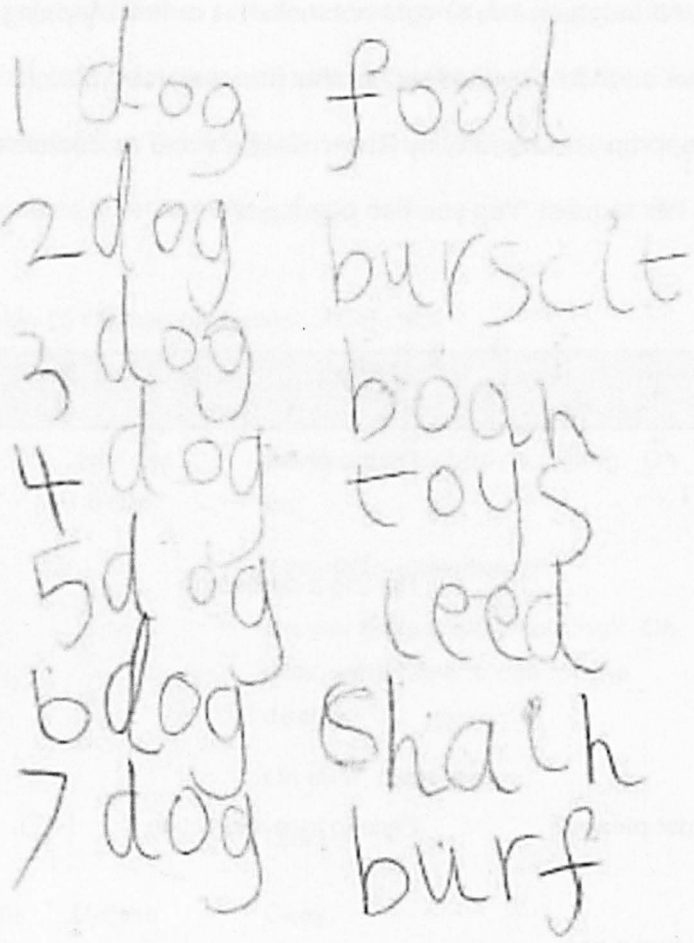

Figure 12 Shopping list for the pet shop

The focus for the children on accompanying their role-play with writing is underlined by the teachers during their introductions (as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 7) and this point is highlighted in the literature (see for example: Hall, 2000, Bodrova and Leong, 2006, Madel Morrow and Schickendanz, 2006, Yoon, 2014). While only a small percentage of the language was accompanied by writing, the fact that it happens at all implies that the children want to carry out writing practice, and more importantly see writing as integral to these socioculturally constructed interactions.

As discussed in Chapter 2 and noted elsewhere, the literature highlights 'props' in research into role-play and play, often categorising them as either 'realistic' for example, a toy till, or 'unrealistic', for example, when a cardboard box might be used as a car, or hiding place. Some Vygotskian inspired research (for example Bodrova and Leong, 2003) argues that realistic props, of the kind found in my research context, can inhibit children's role-play. There are certainly moments in my data that support Bodrova and Leong's suggestion. One such example is shown in Table 47 where Imogen's failure to find a 'phone' prevents a telephone call from taking place.

Table 47 Finding a phone in the vet's (V-EYC1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
13	Paige	*I'm working in the office Ring me on this phone*	Talking to Imogen who is examining the dog through the microscope. Paige has picked up a phone.
14	Imogen (pet owner)	*Okay where's the phone, where's my phone?* **God! This dog, Mum, is just so poorly. Do you think I should like keep this for a minute?**	Looking for the phone
15	Jake (Vet)	**Shall I just take its temperature?**	Jake takes the dog's temperature and show the thermometer to Imogen
16	Paige	**Give me it. Again, give me it, give me the dog. Stay there.**	She takes the thermometer
17	Imogen (pet owner)	**Sorry Mum I can't find a phone. Sorry sister I can't find a phone**	

Although Imogen is not able to make her telephone call in the example cited above, the findings across the data set show a high use of the props in the in-role stages as

highlighted in Table 79 (in Appendix XIII) and exemplified in the same extract above where Jake can be seen to use the thermometer in turn 15. While I accept Vygotsky's suggestion that a non-realistic prop may be more flexible (Vygotsky, 1978), I argue that the realistic props in the role-play encouraged the children to carry out actions and to approximate new meanings that they might not have done with less realistic ones, for example taking a temperature with a thermometer, or using a tape measure to carry out a measurement. These props also prompted discussions about less well understood equipment (for example a microscope) that I will argue in Chapter 7 are important in the consideration of the affordances of learning opportunities in classroom role-play.

6.3 Chapter 6 Conclusions

I have drawn on the conceptualisation of classroom role-play as a genre as presented in Chapter 5 to focus on the registerial choices, of field, tenor and mode, that I have argued realise the in-role utterances at the level of context and register. I have presented the quantitative and qualitative findings and discussion that offers a response to part b) of RQ1:

> How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?
>
> b) How do lexicogrammatical and semiotic choices influence role-play?

I have presented findings and discussion of six groups of three children, playing five different social scenarios demonstrating differences between the individual instantiations, the scenario type, and the genre sub-type. I have shown that the general register features of the type identified in the literature reviewed are also present in my own empirical data, for instance lexical choices (Blum-Kulka et al., 2004), grammatical choices (Corsaro, 1985, Sachs et al., 1985, Hoyte et al., 2014), channels (Gillen, 2000, Gillen and Hall,

2001), and other semiotic resources (Marjanovič-Umek and Lewnik-Mušek, 2001). To further our understanding of children's language in classroom role-play, I have brought together, and explored in a detailed perspective registerial features (as conceptualised in SFL) in order to present a more extensive explanation of how children's lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices construe the different parts of the unfolding scenario and differentiate the different contexts. For instance, field specific lexical items were found in both contexts but used functionally differently and framed in different grammatical constructions.

A focus on register and genre in SFL terms has allowed a more delicate focus on the linguistic realisation of the different genre stages. The language and semiotic choices realise the stages that in turn assist strongly in the construal of the social scenario being played out as the children speak as a character in the role-play. Choices of participants, processes and technical lexemes build the field of the in-role stages. However it is the way in which these choices are made that differentiates the in-role from the regulative context, suggesting a quite delicate understanding of how language choices in-role will construe a particular stage and scenario. Lexicogrammatical choices in terms of mood showed firstly how the children made things happen in the different stages, as required. By close attention to the way in which the speech function, mood structures and the use of modality are combined shows the creative ways that the children are able to manipulate their grammar in quite sophisticated ways influencing the social status of and distance between, the imagined roles. For instance with the use of modality, the children playing the doctor assert authority using interpersonal grammatical metaphor to signal a command. This suggests that the children are aware that certain roles are in control of the interaction and this imagined 'reality' is realised linguistically. Finally, an investigation of channel and role of language showed how the children draw on a range of semiotic resources to enhance field and tenor in meaningful ways for the individual stages and scenarios.

I have presented the findings of a register analysis at the level of the regulative and the in-role language contexts across the data set. The reason for the comparison of these two contexts is to bring to the fore where appropriate the subtle differences between the two registers to build the argument that the children are differentiating two contexts through their language choices. This is particularly interesting given that the children are 4-5 years of age and their understanding of language and the social encounters and responsibilities of roles is only emerging. These findings indicate therefore that the children are at some level already aware of language as a resource for making meaning as they construe two emergent registers within role-play. While the educational focus on children's language is often centred on their grammatical constructions rather than their broader language use in context, this work on meaning-making highlights the complex nature of the children's language capabilities.

I have argued, in the above discussion, that genre staging, semiotic resources and lexicogrammatical choice contribute strongly to the children's enactment of their roles and the construal of the social encounter. This contrasts sharply with Martin and Dombey's work, where they suggest that the 'complexity and richness of the play language may lie,... not in its formal properties, but in how players manage the tensions of creating the play world and storylines, [and] sustain multiple identities...' (Martin and Dombey, 2002:58). Chapters 5 and 6 have highlighted the formal properties of language that directly contribute to the unfolding of the play and the enactment of roles. In Chapter 7, I will present the findings and discussion in response to RQ2:

> What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

7 Learning language, learning through language and learning about language in classroom role-play

7.1 Introduction

It is widely accepted that children's Early Years education lays the foundation for their later academic and social success (Sylva et al., 2010). Furthermore play is recognised in the Early Years curriculum as a 'characteristic of effective learning' (Department for Education, 2014:4) and is therefore a valued aspect of children's Early Years education. Certainly this view was echoed by the two teachers in the study when asked if they thought role-play was a useful learning activity:

> Role-play is a key part of children's communication from when they (...) in school from day one really, and Mrs Cook might tell you that we encourage, when we liaise with the preschools, we encourage lots of role-play because communication is one of the prime areas of the curriculum, and so really it's kind of the grounding for everything else to be able to relay information, to be able to gain confidence in talking and generally, and being imaginative as well. (Mrs Masters, interview data)

While there are relatively few empirical studies that focus specifically on children's role-play and learning, those that do highlight the potential contribution of role-play to various aspects of a young child's learning and development, including language development (Bodrova, 2008), social development (Corsaro, 1985), cognitive development (Marjanovič-Umek and Lewnik-Mušek, 2001, Bourne, 2002, Lillard et al., 2013) and literacy development (Fein et al., 2000, Pellegrini and Galda, 2000, Dyson, 2003, Bodrova and

Leong, 2006, Hoyte et al., 2014). Together this work suggests a vast potential for children's learning. However, it is suggested in educational literature that time to play (and role-play) in the classroom is often reduced in favour of more 'formal' aspects of the Early Years curriculum (Wood, 2010). Furthermore, it appears that parents and practitioners remain concerned whether, what and how children learn in play (Brooker, 2010). I have suggested that the benefits of play have thus far been articulated in educational literature largely through general and rather vague statements about its value where it is at times difficult to see a link to academic learning (see Chapter 2). The literature on role-play has tended to focus on practical recommendations around questions such as the space to play and props. I will argue in this chapter, that classroom role-play has some identifiable and quite specific benefits for children's learning that can be linked to their longer term academic and social success. Furthermore I will suggest that children's language should be considered within a broader context of collaborative meaning-making.

Children's precise uses of language within role-play, and the ways in which these might be related to their learning, remain relatively unexplored in the literature. By choosing an Early Years classroom as the research site and employing a broadly sociocultural theoretical framework and linguistic analytic lens (as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4), my research bridges linguistic and Early Years educational research. I shall present insights concerning the learning potential of classroom role-play through a close examination of children's actual language choices. The central aim of this chapter is thus to present findings from my research that highlight more precisely what and how children learn while engaging in classroom role-play in response to RQ2:

> What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

RQ2 draws on Halliday's observation that there are 'three facets to language development: learning language, learning through language and learning about language' (Halliday, 1980/ 2003:308) as discussed in Section 2.4.2. This observation is central to the chapter and as such I reiterate how these foci are defined. According to Halliday (1980/ 2003) learning language is about learning vocabulary and grammatical structures. Learning through language he suggests, 'refers to language in the construction of reality: how we use language to build up a picture of the world in which we live' (Halliday, 1980/ 2003:317), and finally learning about language is related to a more meta-level understanding of 'register variation, language and society, different media of expression in language...' (Halliday, 1980/ 2003:323). Drawing boundaries around these three areas in a learning interaction such as classroom role-play is not clear cut. In order to frame how and what children learn in classroom role-play, I have proposed to conceptually frame learning in classroom role-play through an interactional approach as first illustrated and discussed in Section 4.4.3. This approach is both a finding and a way of framing the discussion that follows and I reiterate briefly the way in which it has been conceptualised which has been driven by the data analysis.

The interactional approach positions Halliday's learning foci described earlier as either an instance of Interactional Guidance (IG) or Interactional Opportunity (IO). I have defined IGs as conscious moments of teaching or imparting of knowledge either by the teacher during their introductions to the role-play or by a child during the role-play activity. In contrast, IOs are subtle, serendipitous opportunities where the children present themselves with potential opportunities to learn with their peers. I shall argue that these opportunities have the potential to extend the ZPDs of the children in the group, and are central to understanding the learning opportunities afforded in classroom role-play. While there are undoubtedly serendipitous opportunities for learning in the teacher introductions, my main focus of interest is the role-play activities and I look in detail at the children's uses of IGs and IOs among themselves.

The learning areas identified through the analysis data were discussed in Section 4.4.3 and are reiterated here:

- Semantic fields
- Cause-effect relations
- Decontextualised and abstract language
- Literacy and Numeracy practices
- Sociocultural awareness

While listing these learning areas may suggest that they are easily separated, they are in fact interwoven as discussed in Section 4.4.3. For instance literacy practices are understood to be skills associated with sociocultural awareness. In addition, locating the learning areas in relation to Interactional Guidance (IG) and Interactional Opportunities (IO) is not straightforward. The learning areas are also interwoven, and a short exchange may highlight both IGs and IOs across more than one learning area, and as I shall discuss further below, an IG may initiate an IO. In each of the examples that I present, I cannot say for certain that children were not already familiar with these words, structures and concepts. Therefore the discussion of learning is presented as potential for learning and not concrete evidence that learning has taken place. However, I will argue that without the experience of role-play, none of the children would have had the opportunity to extend their knowledge or learning by taking responsibility for the social scenarios through their language as they are able to do in role-play.

The data that I draw on in this chapter are the teacher introductions, the children's role-plays, the teacher interviews and the children's 'writing' produced during the role-plays. I start below by showing how the IG structures in the teacher introductions prime elements of learning within the role-plays and are thus vital for extending the children's learning potential.

7.2 Learning through Interactional Guidance in the teacher introductions and the ways in which this guidance primes the role-plays

The teacher introductions provide an important springboard for some of the interaction that occurs in the children's role-plays. In her interview, Mrs Masters highlights that in a role-play introduction she is guiding the children in their knowledge building:

> I ask lots of open questions to gauge what knowledge the children have of a particular area, and then ask more open questions to them, pin point certain information and direct them, lead them to what I want them to learn. (Mrs Masters, interview data)

I consider the potential influence of these teacher introductions, and focus on how learning is mediated through Interactional Guidance (IG). I explore the introductions in two ways: first, through examining their discursive structure of 'initiation, response, feedback' (IRF) (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) in Section 7.2.1 and, second, through examining the language and multimodal modelling provided by the teacher in Section 7.2.2. I discuss how teachers provide IGs through the IRF structure and modelling that can be seen to extend the children's ZPDs in relation to the learning areas listed above (also see Section 4.4.3), as evidenced in the children's language choices and use of props in the role-plays themselves.

7.2.1 Initiation, Response, Feedback

The dialogic linguistic structure, 'initiation, response, feedback' (IRF), first identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and subsequently recognised as a key structuring device in whole class teaching (Wells, 1999), underpins the nature of the teacher interaction with

the class during the introductions, and it describes one way in which teacher and pupils interactively construct knowledge. A key feature of the IRF structure is that the teacher asks a question (to which they typically know the answer) and uses the child's answer to offer further information and move to a new point. Table 48 below demonstrates the three moves of an IRF interaction beginning with the teacher's question in turn 1, which prompts the children's response followed by the teacher's feedback in turn 3.

Table 48 IRF in the vet's introduction

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	IRF	Notes
1	Mrs Masters	So we are at the vet's. Here it says (school name) vet's. Okay. Who do we take to the vet's again? Can somebody remind me, anybody? Our…	Initiation	The teacher waits for the class response
2	Children	Pets	Response	The children respond together
3	Mrs Masters	Our pets. Okay, hands up if you have a pet. Okay, put your hands down, put your hands up if you have ever been to the vet's. Okay, Josh, what pet did you take to the vet's?	Feedback Initiation (new)	

Mrs Masters has introduced the notion of a vet's surgery and a taxonomy of 'pets' to the class. She invites the children to contribute to a subsequent discussion that extends the taxonomy through a question and response exchange about pets.

The findings show that not only are abstract taxonomies, and more broadly semantic fields, frequently highlighted through the IRF sequences I recorded, as above, but also physical objects and the lexical items that denote these objects, which are introduced 24

times through IRF constructions within the teacher introduction corpus in this way. Typically, the teachers show an observable referent to the children, for example a play thermometer, and use the prop to highlight the related lexical item, implicitly placing that item within a relevant semantic field, as in Table 49 below.

Table 49 Example of IRF: discussion of tape measure

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	IRF	Notes
45	Mrs Cook	Do you know what this is for? What do you think?	Initiation	Holding a measuring tape
46	James	(Unclear)	Response	
47	Mrs Cook	This isn't a stethoscope is it? This is not the same thing is it? Ryan?	Feedback Initiation	
48	Ryan	A waister	Response	
49	Mrs Cook	I know what you mean but it's not quite that. Alex do you know?	Feedback Initiation	
50	Alex	Uhh it's a number line	Response	
51	Mrs Cook	It is a number line, it's a very good idea. It is a number line. It has got a special name, it is called a measure, it's called a tape measure, because it's a piece of tape that has got lots of numbers on it to measure.	Feedback	

Mrs Cook introduces the lexical item 'tape measure' by showing a tape measure to her class in turn 45. Through the relational clause, 'It's called a tape measure' the children learn a relationship between two participants, 'it' as the actual referent and the lexical item. Through this strategy the children can relate 'names deictically to the observable referents in the immediate context' (Painter, 1999b:69).

From the three attempts, in turns 46, 48, 50, in Table 49, it is clear that there are some children who are not able to provide the lexical term, and in turn 51 the teacher provides the class with the correct term. The introduction of a new lexical item gives the children the potential to place that item within an appropriate semantic field. These lexical items are used within the semantic field of a Clinician Consultation (for example), and it is through the teacher introduction and the children's subsequent role-play, that they have an opportunity to place these terms within a taxonomy of medical instruments that might be used with a baby in a baby clinic, or a pet at a vet's.

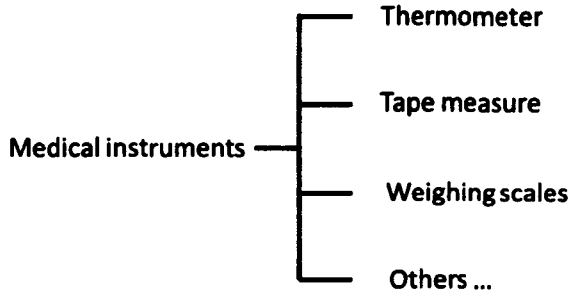

Figure 13 Development of a semantic field in the Clinician Consultation

While the finding that IRF highlights how the teachers are pedagogically able to draw attention to particular lexical items may not be surprising, close attention to the language choices in the children's later role-plays demonstrates that this strategy is successful in terms of supporting children's learning of language, as evidenced in Table 50 below:

Table 50 Measuring the baby (BC EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
101	Daniel (doctor)	**I need to measure this baby. How long her is**	Daniel takes the measuring tape and measures the baby
102	Yusra (nurse)	**She's about um...**	Yusra looks at the measuring tape Daniel is holding
103	Daniel (doctor)	**61 for this baby**	Daniel 'reads' from the measuring tape

The IRF structure in Table 49 introduced a new lexical item, the tape measure, and the children have been drawn through their ZPD in terms of learning language as evidenced by the child's use of the measuring tape. As I highlighted earlier, Painter suggests children need to learn the 'semantic space' into which lexical items fit (1996:56). I suggest that the classroom role-play provides a 'semantic space' that may not yet be available to children in the 'real world'. While the children are likely to have encountered a tape measure, using one in the context of being a doctor and measuring a baby is less likely. More broadly across the corpus, the teachers introduce lexical items and how they fit into a particular semantic space in the different social scenarios, thereby encouraging the development not simply of new words, but also of expanded and new taxonomies and new ways of classifying the world (Painter, 1999a). These new and extended fields facilitate the creation of new meanings. The teacher in her introduction has not only provided a new word for the children but a new resource for meaning-making. That is to say the lexical item 'tape measure' can now be used by the children as part of the meaning-making in this context. This point is illustrated in Table 50, turn 101, where Daniel choses to employ the tape measure as part of his role as a doctor. Although Daniel does not use the term tape measure, he does use the material process 'to measure', carries out and approximates a measurement. The term tape measure is also introduced by the other class teacher (Mrs Masters) in her introduction and employed by Groups EYM1 and EYM3 in the baby clinic. The particular meanings that are construed

(as exemplified in Table 50) would not be possible without the emerging understanding of the tape measure and its place within the semantic field. While it is impossible to know how much Daniel knew about a tape measure beforehand, this interaction points to evidence that learning has potentially taken place. If we accept that the children did not know, or had limited knowledge about the tape measure before the teacher's Interactional Guidance, the data in the role-plays shows a potential extension of the children's ZPD evidenced through their linguistic and non-linguistic action.

The consideration of Semantic fields as an area of learning above and beyond simply 'learning new words' is important. Table 50 demonstrates that the new lexical items in context enable the construction of new meanings in the context of the baby clinic, which facilitates learning through language. The children in the role-play use (part of) the term that the teacher has introduced and they have also put the use of the physical prop into practice. Their language and multimodal choices show that they have understood and can appropriate an emerging understanding of a tape measure. Linking back to the discussion in Chapter 5 on genre stages, the children are construing a particular stage through their language and multimodal choices. These choices are partly facilitated by the teacher's introduction of the term tape measure and are enhanced in the opportunity to use the term in an appropriate 'semantic space' in the role-play. Other examples of lexical items that occurred in the role-plays that were introduced in the teacher introductions include: thermometer, injection, bandage, medicine and stethoscope.

Cause-effect relations is another area of learning that can be seen to be primed by the IRF discourse structure in the teacher introductions. An example of cause-effect can be seen in Table 51 below where the teacher introduces the relevance of taking a baby's temperature. The IRF provides a springboard for moving from classifications of medical instruments and how they are used, as discussed earlier, to what they can reveal in terms

of the baby's health. Here it can be seen that this IRF discussion has also been initiated from the physical prop.

Table 51 Interactional Guidance: priming of cause-effect relations

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
56	Mrs Cook	...why does the doctor need to know about the baby's temperature? Leila?
57	Leila	Because they check if you're hot
58	Mrs Cook	And if you're too hot, what might that mean? Ollie?
59	Ollie	A fever
60	Mrs Cook	You might be sick, you might have a fever. Okay, so the doctor might take your temperature and usually they might put something called a thermometer in your mouth but quite often they put it under your arm to see if you're hot because if you're very hot it might mean that you're sick, that you're poorly.

The success of this IRF structure priming cause-effect knowledge and meanings can be seen in the role-plays in, for example Table 52 which shows that the children have understood that the thermometer is an instrument that will tell them how unwell the baby is and that 'hot' means the baby is unwell.

Table 52 Cause-effect in the baby clinic (BC-EYC1)

Turn	Child (Role)	Utterance	Notes
33	Yusra (nurse)	**Now this is the thing that how much sickie she is, or anything like that**	The children have a thermometer
34	Daniel (doctor)	**How hot her is. That's how hot her is. Hurry up please. Now give it to her**	Yusra holds the thermometer to the baby's mouth
34	Yusra (nurse)	**A lot it means**	
35	Daniel (doctor)	**Very hot so I need to be here for a hundred**	

The introduction of physical referents and the lexical items that denote them in the teacher introductions are, I argue, foundational in learning not only new words and abstract lexical items, but also learning through language as in the example of cause and effect relations and in drawing the children through their ZPD. The extract shows that the children have understood how a thermometer can show that the baby 'is hot' and that this indicates 'how much sickie she is'. In turn 35, Daniel links the baby's temperature to the amount of time she will have to stay in hospital. Thus the children have clearly grasped the link between having a high temperature and being unwell, through either previous personal experience or the teacher's interactional guidance in her introduction to the activity, which helps to draw them through their ZPD. While many of the children would have already experienced a temperature and being unwell, to be able to use the language that communicates that another person is unwell shows that they are able to apply the same knowledge correctly to other situations (cf. Aitchison, 1994). Furthermore I argue, they are able to take the opportunity to use language that in 'real life' would typically be the responsibility of an adult. The role-play is giving the children an opportunity to learn, practise and extend what they know about these concepts. I return to this data extract in more detail in Section 7.3.2.

While the children in Table 52 are not discussing actual numbers, there is an emergent sense of their significance in measuring 'hotness' and of scaling ('a lot' is linked to 'very hot' and 'a hundred'). Numeracy and literacy are at the forefront of the National Curriculum for the Early Years as discussed in Section 2.5.1. Chapters 5 and 6 highlighted that the children's use of emergent numeracy and literacy practices in these contexts assist in the construal of the social encounter. From the amount of attempts to express numbers in some way across the data set, there is a strong implication that the children understand (from the teacher introductions and elsewhere) this is integral to the meaning-making within these types of social scenarios. Table 49 and Table 50 above introduced the tape measure, and Table 51 and Table 52 a thermometer. I provide another example in the extract below, where Mrs Masters is explaining the price label on a pet (in the pet shop introduction), and again this prop has particular significance. She explains to the children that they will need to communicate the price of the pet and that it should be in Pounds.

Table 53 Interactional Guidance: Numeracy practices

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
90	Mrs Masters	...Okay, maybe someone at the front can read what it says, Rory?	'It' – the price label.
91	Rory	Rabbit £3	
92	Mrs Masters	Okay, rabbit £3, so what does it tell us? Nicole what does it tell us?	
93	Nicole	It tell us what the price is	
94	Mrs Masters	It tells us what the price is, fantastic, okay. So we know that this rabbit costs 3	The teacher waits after 3 for the children to say pounds.
95	Children	Pounds	
96	Mrs Masters	£3. So when you come to the shop you need to bring the right money.	

In the children's role-plays, the pet shop money transaction is relatively undeveloped by the children as I have discussed in Section 5.3.1. The stage occurs less frequently than others and is realised with more congruent structures, for example 'You have to pay' (HC-EYC2), 'Give me some money' (PS-EYM3). However, across the data set, the children do appear to recognise that the measurement and counting introduced (temperature, length, weight, pricing) requires a numerical response and they make attempts to create appropriate meanings with approximations using their existing linguistic resources and knowledge:

Temperature: Let's see how hot she is. She's up to 125 (BC-EYM2)

Length: The baby is 14 long (BC-EYM1)

Weight: Her weight is 1. 1 weight (BC-EYM1)

Price: These shoes are £100 or £1 (SS-EYC1)

Their emerging approximations of numerical scales shows that the children are being drawn through their ZPDs in terms of numeracy awareness and their learning of numeracy practices. I suggest that the opportunities for learning in classroom role-play extend beyond simply being able to produce realistic and appropriate measurements as I will discuss in more detail in Section 7.3 below.

Literacy is another key area of the National Curriculum and has been highlighted as one of the areas of learning that emerged from the data. The children are able to begin to engage with literacy practices in the role-plays through the provision of a clipboard, paper and pencils. The children are introduced to writing in these contexts through the teachers presenting social roles that have a responsibility for particular literacy practices across the different social encounters, for instance taking an order in the cafe.

Table 54 Interactional Guidance: Literacy practices

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
41	Mrs Cook	Yes, a waiter asks you what food you would like to eat or drink, or what drink you would like to drink. Do they have to remember it in their head do you think? Or do they do something else?	
42	Children	They write it down	The class respond together
43	Mrs Cook	Usually they write it down don't they so they don't forget.	

The children express an understanding of the teachers' literacy prompts in two ways. Firstly, they use the literacy practices themselves in the role-plays (as also discussed in Chapters 5 and 6). The children engage with literacy practices, albeit at a rudimentary level, with great enthusiasm in particular in the baby clinic, pet shop and cafe role-plays producing a number of 'written' texts relating to their role and the social context of the role-play for example in Figure 14 below.

Name.....

Weight.....

.

Age.....

Figure 14 'The baby has infection'

The second way in which the children respond to the teachers' literacy prompts is through commands to their peers to engage in the practices, realised through imperatives and declaratives with modal verbs functioning as commands.

> You have to write something in there okay? (BC-EYC3)
>
> Write that down (PS-EYM2)

The findings support the suggestion that classroom role-play encourages literacy. Moreover, opportunities to learn literacy (and numeracy) practices highlight, in particular, associated learning of sociocultural norms, practices and expectations. For instance, through the children using language to construe particular meanings that are appropriate for their own social role (as discussed in Chapter 6), and in the different stages (as discussed in Chapter 5), they are building their awareness of how different social roles are responsible for particular meaning-making within different social interactions. I suggest that these are opportunities to learn about language as first discussed in Section 3.3.1, as

the children build their experience of using different language (register) to construe different sociocultural contexts (genre).

In summary, I have drawn attention to the priming of the role-plays through dialogic IRF structures in examples from the teacher introductions and where knowledge is appropriated in the children's role-plays. I have argued that the children's approximations of new meanings in the role-plays indicate strongly that they are using new concepts primed in the IRF constructions. These new concepts provide opportunities for the children to extend their ZPDs within the learning areas set out in 4.4.3. I now consider how the teachers' modelling of language and their demonstration of props contributes to learning in the children's role-plays.

7.2.2 Multimodal modelling

In addition to constructing knowledge with children through Interactional Guidance within an IRF structure, in the role-play introductions the teachers also modelled the use of particular kinds of language and modelled how to use some of the props. During the interview, Mrs Cook does not draw attention to linguistic behaviours explicitly, yet she does highlight that multimodal modelling is used as part of the informal teaching in the role-play area:

> It [modelling] could be as simple as the adult being the secretary and showing them [the children] what to do, the adult being the person who makes the tea, it depends, sometimes they haven't got that knowledge to do it themselves (Mrs Cook, interview data)

In Moore's review of literature on repetition (Section 2.4.2) she suggests that language modelling is a form of 'guided repetition' (2011:213), and important for language and sociocultural learning. Some form of modelling occurs in all the teacher introductions and

there are two main types. Firstly, the teachers model vocabulary and the use of specific phrases associated with a role in the social encounter. The second example of modelling is that of demonstrating how to use the 'play' equipment as in Table 49 above, where the teacher models how to use the measuring tape.

Taking the language modelling first, the data showed that both the Early Years teachers modelled language in their introductions but their approaches are different. Mrs Cook models the language herself by projecting the imagined speech of the customer as in the example:

> And you might say "I'd like some water please.", "Good morning, what would you like to drink today? And would you like something to eat?", "Oh yes, I'd like a chicken sandwich please."

Mrs Masters, taking a different approach, asks the children to come forward and prompts them to play out a short role-play in front of the class, correcting their language by modelling what she would prefer to hear, as exemplified in Table 55 below.

Table 55 Modelling in the teacher introduction (shoe shop)

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
55	Mrs Masters	Don't worry you will all get a chance, so Dylan do you remember what to do to measure feet, can you show me? So what do you need to say to Zac first?
56	Ryan	Take your shoes off
57	Mrs Masters	Please take your shoes off
58	Ryan	Please take your shoes off
59	Mrs Masters	Tell them what you are going to do. What are you going to do? I'm going to …
60	Ryan	Measure his feet
61	Mrs Masters	So tell him, 'I'm going to…
62	Ryan	Inaudible
63	Mrs Masters	Okay, good boy, what size is he? What does it say here? Okay, so say 'you are size 10'
64	Ryan	You are size 10
65	Mrs Masters	Then write it down on the sheet. Okay excellent now you can say 'Zac, why don't you look for some shoes that you like
66	Ryan	Why don't you look for some shoes that you like
67	Mrs Masters	Good boy. Zac, you can go and choose some shoes that you like, and then you can say to Cara 'oh I'll help you in a minute'.
68	Ryan	I'll help you in a minute

The teacher's introduction corpus highlights that the modelling of language and the opportunities to learn about language are conveyed experientially rather than metalinguistically. In each of her turns the teacher models language, which is then repeated by the child. In her interview, Mrs Masters draws attention to the way in which she will often structure her modelling which can be seen clearly in the extract in Table 55:

> ...often in the Early Years the children will give a single answer or one single word, so the scaffolding actually rather gives you, you know, gives you a starting point, you know, finish off the sentence and then hopefully the next time they'll say the whole sentence grammatically correct and so on and so forth, a bit like a puzzle. (Mrs Masters, interview data)

Mrs Masters, in turn 57 (Table 55 above) builds on Ryan's 'take your shoes off' to add 'please' to the command but does not draw attention to why this might be more appropriate. In the cafe introduction, Mrs Masters comments on the children's 'lovely manners' (not exemplified here) but she neither draws explicit attention to the grammatical form that the child repeats, nor the difference between this and other potential language choices and their possible impact on meaning. I suggest that the opportunities to learn language (through particular registerial choices) can be seen, yet the opportunity to learn about language is not presented nor picked up explicitly. The example below (Table 56) where Mrs Masters asks Ryan to produce 'a full sentence', is the only place where a teacher talks about language at a meta-level across the corpus of teacher introductions.

Table 56 'Talk in a full sentence'

Turn	Speaker	Utterance
103	Mrs Masters	Okay so Ruby has just said 'what pet would you like?' and Ryan, you are going to say? (Pause) So I
104	Ryan	(Inaudible)
105	Mrs Masters	Talk in a full sentence. "I would like a rabbit please"
106	Ryan	I would like a rabbit please

Here, Mrs. Masters still omits to say why a full sentence is preferred. However, the success of her request is in evidence in the children's linguistic choices in the pet shop role-plays:

> May I buy a rabbit please? (PS-EYM1)

Can I have a little dog please? (PS-EYM3)

Sociocultural understandings, as Moore suggests, can be extended through guided repetition (for instance the modelling of politeness as well as grammar in Tables 53, 54 and 66). Classroom role-play appears an ideal site for examining the opportunities for children to extend their understanding of sociocultural expectations and to be drawn through their ZPDs in this aspect of learning. For instance, the teacher can demonstrate the grammatical structures, interpersonal grammatical metaphor and politeness conventions that are appropriate in specific contexts (learning language) and for the children to later appropriate them in a meaningful cultural context. Therefore, modelling provides opportunities to learn about the distribution of speech functions in the specific social scenarios; who has responsibility for the give and take of the information exchange and the form of that exchange (implicitly, learning about language). The nature of these teaching points can only be revealed through close investigation of what the teachers focus on and how the focus is presented. Although not expressed explicitly, the teacher interviews suggest that the teachers are aware of the children building their sociocultural understandings through role-play.

> A lot of it is language, the development of language for the children, a lot of it is re-enacting situations that they may or may not have come across at home, sometimes it is very much what they have learnt at home and they are re-enacting that, and I think that it's them coming to terms with the world actually, them being able to justify things, maybe exploring things that are maybe troubling them a little bit and it's usually that kind of thing really. (Mrs Cook, interview data)

Cause-effect meanings is another area of learning that is reinforced through the language modelling as in the example below:

> Okay, so Doctor will um will check baby's temperature like this and then wait..... "oh baby's temperature, actually yes, it's a little bit on the high side" so then the doctor will get his note and write down "baby poorly high temperature" and the

doctor might say "the baby needs some medicine". (Baby clinic introduction Mrs Masters)

The teacher is providing a way of introducing an element of causality in this context. Essentially Mrs Masters has modelled a genre stage in the Clinician Consultation and at the same time implicitly highlighted the types of meanings that are typically found in this particular stage. Although not explicitly explaining the point, she is showing the children that a high temperature means that the baby is unwell which in turn means that he or she will require medicine. The priming of cause-effect meanings is taken up in other instances by the children in the role-plays, as in the example below where Philip is explaining why his baby is sick:

...she's sick <u>because</u> she's eaten loads and loads of food in my tummy. (BC-EYM1)

So far I have discussed modelling language and the impact that this has on learning language and learning through language. While the role-play introduction appears to be a rich site for learning about language, in this data I have suggested that only a few opportunities are provided explicitly in the teacher modelling to learn about language. The props in the role-play area are demonstrated by the teachers within their introductions, not simply to introduce new lexical items, but in order to model to the children how they should be used. Thus the teachers further facilitate the areas of learning that are aligned with, and enable learning through language. For example, in Table 49 above the teacher introduces the tape measure using an IRF structure and then shows the class how it can be used.

The influence of the modelling of props is highlighted particularly in the different ways in which the children engage with them in the baby clinic and the vet's role-plays. Props are not modelled to the same extent in the cafe, pet shop and shoe shop. While it is highly likely that the children will have experienced a doctor's consultation, they may not have been to a vet's consultation. In the role-plays props are foregrounded in the baby clinic

introductions but not in the vet's, although the same props are present. Interestingly, the children's ability to engage with the stages and the props in the vet's is less successful than in the baby clinic. This might suggest that the children needed the Interactional Guidance related to the props in order to exploit their full potential in the vet's scenario.

7.2.3 Section summary

I have shown how the Interactional Guidance provided by teachers, through the IRF structure and language and multimodal modelling, draw the children through their ZPDs in the teacher introductions and in the role-plays in the learning areas of Semantic fields (Table 48 Table 49), Cause-effect (Table 60 and 61), Sociocultural awareness (Table 63 and 64), and of Literacy and Numeracy practices (Table 53). I provided evidence of this learning in extracts from the role-plays where the children appropriated words, structures and concepts that can be linked to the introductions. While I cannot say for sure that the children were not familiar with these words, structures and concepts before, none of the children would have had the opportunities to put this new learning into the context of an adult language role in these social scenarios as they do in role-play. The teacher interviews highlighted the value that the teachers placed on being able to provide input as part of, and to enhance, the role-play activity:

> but then they [the children] all need to be involved [in role-play] you need to teach them the skill (Mrs Cook, interview data)

I suggest that the pedagogic strategies of IRF and modelling enable the children to firstly learn language through the new lexical items and grammatical structures that are highlighted in the teacher introductions. Secondly, the children are able to learn through language, that is to say the new language learned is put to use in a role-play to construe a relevant context, and the children are able to extend their ZPDs further by learning through that new (and existing) language, using the richly resourced environment of the

role-play area as the enabling environment or 'semantic space'. Figure 15 illustrates this point and highlights how the children's ZPDs may be extended by learning language that enables learning through language, which in turn enables learning about language and so on, echoing the learning 'spiralling' discussed in Section 3.2.1.

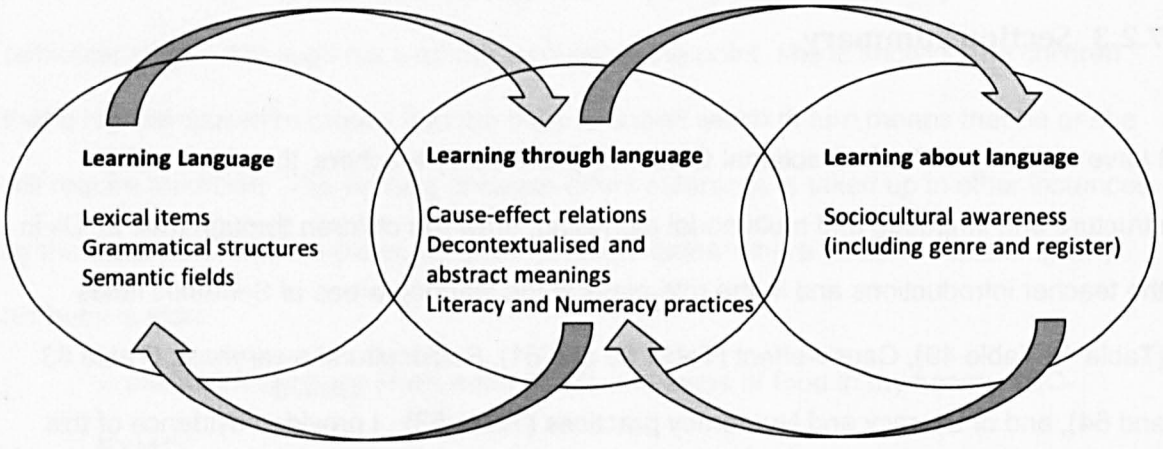

Figure 15 Learning language enables learning through language and learning about language

Furthermore I have identified that the real life props are particularly significant in that learning. The props, which have at times in the literature been considered restrictive (Bodrova and Leong, 2003, Rogers and Evans, 2007) are, I argue, foundational for learning language and learning through language because of their importance as a physical referent for lexical terms, and their enriching of the semantic space within the role-play. In Chapters 5 and 6 I discussed also how the props contributed meaning to the construal of the imagined social roles and the individual genre stages.

In terms of learning about language, I have identified moments where the children are encouraged to learn about language through the modelling of the role-plays, for instance, in drawing attention to which roles have responsibilities for which stages in an interaction, and politeness conventions reflecting registerial choices and understanding of different genres. However I have highlighted that the teacher introductions only draw attention implicitly to opportunities for the children to learn about language and to develop the children's metalinguistic awareness.

The teacher introductions are only part of the learning potential of classroom role-play. The linked peer-led role-plays are the main focus of this chapter, and it is the close analysis of the children's peer-led role-play dialogic interactions that I now discuss in Section 7.3.

7.3 Learning through Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities in the children's role-plays

The linguistic strategies of the teaching in the introductions (Interactional Guidance) have been linked to the children's appropriation in the subsequent role-plays. These findings, I argued, demonstrate that the teacher introductions are successful in priming the children's learning. However teacher input is not the only way in which children learn in classroom role-play. Some of the learning I will discuss in this section will have been primed by the teacher introductions (discussed in 7.2 above), however I will argue that the learning from the introductions is extended and enhanced by the nature of classroom role-play being peer-led and dialogic. I highlight the areas of learning (first introduced in Section 4.4.3, and again above in Section 7.1) that can be identified as being activated in particular through firstly the child-led dialogue, secondly the children's use of props and finally self-repetition. As previously discussed, there is some overlap not only between the areas of learning but also in the way in which the activating features of classroom role-play work together. I draw examples from the data to show how the children support each other to extend their ZPDs in different ways throughout the unfolding role-play dialogue. In Section 7.3.1, I begin by discussing Interactional Guidance generated among peers, in the children's role-plays and then in Section 7.3.2 I discuss the Interactional Opportunities.

7.3.1 Interactional Guidance in the role-plays

In this section I will argue that children provide each other with instances of Interactional Guidance (IGs). Drawing on each others' knowledge specifically, the children request and offer information in their peer groups. A critical difference between the IGs in the form of IRFs in the teacher introductions and the questions of the children, is that the children ask questions to which they do not know the answer. However, the child respondent to the question will offer knowledge as an 'expert', therefore these instances are considered Interactional Guidance. In addition, as I will demonstrate below, the children's requests and offers of knowledge have, in a sense, the ability to pause the role-play in order to present and jointly collaborate on the construction of new knowledge.

Table 57 demonstrates an example of 'pausing' in a role-play'. Group EYM1 is in the baby clinic, and Philip's question in turn 92 'what's this?' begins a regulative stage (as discussed in Chapter 5), to request information about the physical object in his hand. It is notable again, as I highlighted in 7.2 above, that the prop has prompted the question. The children at this point have the potential to learn a new word as Ryan correctly identifies the object as a microscope.

Table 57 The microscope in the vet's (BC-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
92	Philip	*What's this?*	Picking up a microscope
93	Ryan	*Um, that's a microscope*	
94	Philip	*Why?*	
95	Ryan	*It can look at small germs. It makes germs bigger. It makes germs bigger, it's cool.*	
96	Nicole	*I need to turn*	Wants to hold the microscope and move the lens up and down
97	Philip	*Can I see now?*	
98	Nicole	*Ryan you are actually wrong. It's wrong. Is that wrong Philip*	
99	Philip	*No we are just pretending that's wrong. I can't see*	
100	Nicole (vet)	**Now time for your injection on your eyebrow**	Talking to the pet at the vet's (in-role)
101	Philip	*It does make it smaller and bigger, look*	Winding the lens up and down and confirms the function of making things bigger and smaller

'What's this?' (turn 92), has 'paused' the role-play. A role-play pause highlights an important finding (typical in the children's role-play data) that the child's request for information, in contrast to an adult led IRF, has initiated an extended dialogue between the children. The dialogic discussion can be seen to involve the three children as a peer group that have the responsibility to contribute to the exchange in a more equal way than typical in an IRF exchange. One child offers information about the item in question, and following, there is a challenge and subsequent confirmation of the initial information. In a

similar situation with an adult, the child might have been provided with the correct answer but would not have benefited from the resulting dialogue. It appears that the exchange of information enables a longer dialogue than an IRF and thereby more opportunity to develop their understanding. A consequence of this particular child-led dialogue is that the children continue to explore the microscope, and they have to work harder to justify and defend their position. This single question blends into what I will discuss in more detail below as an Interactional Opportunity.

A role-play pause occurs ten times in the dataset (mainly in the baby clinic with four instances, but with at least one instance in each role-play type). While this is a relatively small number the fact it occurs at all suggests an interesting point to highlight. I suggest that the fact the children ask each other for information provides evidence that the role-play environment encourages the co-construction of knowledge through extended peer-led dialogue. This is an example, as I highlighted in Section 3.2.2, of where Vygotsky, suggests that children can be drawn through their ZPD 'in collaboration with more capable peers' (Vygotsky, 1978:86).

The children's questions (pausing the role-plays) prompt their peers to offer 'expert' information. In the example above, Ryan (turn 93 and 95) can be seen to offer expert information about the microscope. In another example, children's IGs can be seen in their language about their peers' literacy skills. The children draw on each other to assist in, for example, spelling names and words. The children ask how to spell a name or word six times during the role-plays (across the baby clinic, cafe and pet shop) and offer literacy knowledge as highlighted in Table 58 below where Philip corrects how the 'P' has been written.

Table 58 A literacy moment (BC-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
32	Nicole (Nurse)	**Philip - P H I L I P**	Nicole is writing, then 'sounds out' Philip
33	Philip	You've writ the P the wrong way round	
34	Nicole	Okay	

While it is difficult to be precise about whether one child is more capable than another in these cases it can be seen that the children present themselves as 'expert' in different ways. Table 59 illustrates one such example. In this extract, Lucy is not demonstrating 'expert' help in the sense that her spelling of bath is incorrect (although she has 'sounded out' the word as the children are encouraged to do), but it does show the children collaborating to build knowledge, and I suggest that they are therefore learning to learn together. I return to this point in Section 7.3.2.

Table 59 Not such expert help in the pet shop (PS-EYM2)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
119	Rosie (customer)	**No, one more what do I need. One more**	Rosie is compiling a shopping list of what she needs to buy for her dog
120	Lucy (other)	**A toy bath**	
121	Rosie (customer)	**A doggie bath**	
122	Lucy (other)	When I sit on this table it makes it wobbly.	
123	Rosie (customer	**A bath**	
124	Lucy (other)	**A dog bath**	
		B a r f	'sounds out' bath as BARF
125	Rosie (customer)	**B A R**	
126	Lucy (other)	**A R F**	

Sociocultural awareness is another learning area that emerges from the data as an area of learning in which the children play the expert. The children's language choices reveal that classroom role-play is an important site for the exploration of sociocultural awareness. Ochs (2002:103) suggests that:

> ...how people are to act, feel, and think in specific situations do not typically take the form of explicit instructions but rather must be inferred from performances of conventional, socially co-ordinated activities, and interpretative practices

However, the children in the role-plays do offer sociocultural prompts and expert advice explicitly (and therefore IGs) in how their peers are to act, feel and think in specific situations. In classroom role-play there are two sets of expectations that the children must navigate. Firstly the expectations of the classroom, and secondly those of the social

encounter they are engaged in. There are 12 instances where the children set out specifically for their peers when and how they feel the expectations of the classroom have been, or are in danger, of being broken. I suggest that these language choices are examples of Interactional Guidance as the language is realised through commands.

Don't push me (HC-EYM3)

Don't snatch (V-EYM1)

And don't be naughty Jake. If you do I'll tell on you (V-EYC1)

The children are learning through their language the classroom-behaviour expectations from their peers, and essentially sociocultural expectations of this particular context. There are also 23 instances where the children make explicit suggestions of what is supposed to happen in the social encounter they are role-playing, for instance in how a particular stage should progress:

You have to pay (HC-EYC2)

Put that nurse one on (BC-EYC3)

These explicit commands within the peer group, either setting out classroom expectations or expectations of the social encounter. While they children are unaware, I suggest that they are learning aspects of generic staging. These are examples of where the children provide IGs to others specifically in the area of Sociocultural awareness, thus highlighting how the children can extend each other's ZPDs in learning through language.

Decontextualised language use, is also prompted by IGs in the role-play data. The role-plays are rooted firmly in the 'here and now', that is to say in the ongoing action of the role-play itself. However, there are moments where the children index contexts outside the immediate physical environment of the role-play area and the classroom. Utterances of this type have been identified as 'other' as discussed in Section 4.3.2. These moments appear at times, to be signalled by 'do you know'. This construction, Painter (1999a)

suggests, is recognised as a formula to signal that instructional information is to follow. In the role-play corpus, there are seven instances of 'do you know' and the children signal decontextualised contexts outside the immediate physical space of the classroom and role-play area.

> Do you know my aunty died and the baby died as well? (Nicole BC-EYM1)
>
> Once, do you know, one day I saw two dogs? They were walking out. I saw them every day. Do you know what happened? One was jumping at me. (Philip PS-EYM1)

The opportunities that classroom role-play has to prompt these more decontextualised and abstract meanings are important and I will discuss this in more detail in Section 7.3.2.

In summary, I have argued that during the unfolding role-plays, the children pause the in-role stages and effectively request and offer knowledge from and to their peers. Close attention to the language choices reveals that particular linguistic strategies, questions and responses, including 'do you know', enable the requests and offers of knowledge. I suggest that these peer-led interactions involve IGs, and that they are differently realised from those discussed in the teacher introductions. While the children draw on each other as experts, or position themselves as more knowledgeable, they do not use the IRF structure and IGs often leads to more extended dialogues between children, which offer further learning opportunities. Thus these moments of IGs blend into what I have termed Interactional Opportunities, which I discuss in more detail in the section below.

7.3.2 Interactional Opportunities in the role-play

I turn now from the discussion of the IGs and opportunities for learning that I have suggested are conscious moments of teaching by either the teacher (in the role-play introductions) or child (in the peer-led role-plays), to more serendipitous and opportunistic moments of learning. In the discussion of the microscope presented earlier (Table 57), I

suggested that the question and response exchange between Philip and Ryan developed into an Interactional Opportunity for learning (IO). I will argue that the children's extended dialogue, use of props and self-repetition in the role-plays opens up IOs to extend their ZPDs in the learning areas discussed above and thereby the opportunities to learn language, learn through language and learn about language. Furthermore I suggest that the ZPD extensions would not be possible in the same way in an adult to child interaction, and the nature of the symmetrical dialogic interaction means the children learn how to learn collaboratively.

The dialogic nature of role-play

The notion of dialogue as I highlighted in Chapters 2 and 3, is highly relevant to learning and is a central tenet to both Vygotsky's (1978) and Halliday's theories of learning (1993). As I have noted earlier in this thesis, I consider dialogue to be central to the potential that classroom role-play has to contribute to children's learning. Dialogue, in the context of classroom discourse, is built over a series of turns and stages and is not restricted to the typical IRF exchanges seen in the teacher introductions (discussed in Section 7.2 above) that are common in the classroom and arguably restrictive in some ways in terms of learning (e.g. van Lier, 2001). As highlighted previously, empirical research shows that dialogue enhances the construction of knowledge in the area of language learning and learning through language (for example Painter, 1999a, Halliday, 1980/ 2003, Mercer, 2000). In Chapter 5 and 6 I discussed the ways in which the unfolding dialogue enables the children to construe the social scenario. Now I focus on the unfolding dialogue in terms of the opportunities for learning: Semantic fields, Cause-effect relations, Decontextualised and abstract language, Literacy and Numeracy practices and Sociocultural awareness.

Table 60 below demonstrates an example of what I mean by dialogue in the context of classroom role-play. It is a series of turns around which goods and services or information and knowledge may be exchanged between the children in the role-play as discussed in Chapter 4. The example shows how the dialogic nature of classroom role-play allows the children the opportunity to spontaneously collaborate to reach an agreement on an unknown lexical item, a dog collar. While they are able to identify the physical referent (in turn 105), they are unable to retrieve the correct lexical item, but they do suggest potential synonyms and a description of what the item is.

Table 60 Dialogic collaboration in the pet shop (PS-EYM2)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
100	Rosie (customer)	**What do I need for my dog, only one more, only about two more.**	Rosie is writing a list
101	Rory	**Belt**	
102	Rosie	**Belt**	Rosie starts to write on her list.
103	Lucy	Not a belt like that a lead thing to go round it's neck	
104	Rory	A lead	
105	Lucy	No a thing that goes round Floppy's neck like this	Picks up a toy dog with a collar round its neck
106	Rory	Oh that's a chain. Is that a chain?	
107	Lucy	Like Floppy, on it for Floppy	

The children are using their linguistic and semiotic resources (the toy dog) to attempt to locate a new lexical item within a particular taxonomy of dog equipment and collaborating in exploring a semantic field. Together they can be seen to be engaging in what Littleton, Mercer and their colleagues term Exploratory Talk, (as discussed in Chapter 2):

> Exploratory Talk demonstrates the active joint engagement of the children with one another's ideas. Whilst initiations may be challenged and counter-challenged, appropriate justifications are articulated and alternative hypotheses offered. Where alternative accounts are offered, they are developments of the initiation. Progress thus emerges from the joint acceptance of suggestions (Littleton, Mercer, Dawes, Wegerif, Rowe and Sams 2005)

Lucy and Rory's joint collaboration is clear (turns 103 to 107) as they discuss what the item is for, and what it is not. While the children are not able to provide the term collar, the nature of the interaction underlines the strength of the children's peer-led dialogue. They have created an opportunity to extend their understanding, and therefore their ZPD, of a particular semantic field (of dog equipment) together which includes other items such as chain and lead.

The Interactional Opportunities that are presented in this example show evidence of peer-led collaboration with the focus being language itself. This is significant because the absence of a typical classroom IRF exchange with the correct answer means that the children have to work harder to build the knowledge with their peers. I argue that this dialogic exchange provides convincing evidence of the children attempting to co-construct knowledge, employing, practising and extending their linguistic capabilities and knowledge in order to justify a position. Furthermore, I suggest that the children are learning how to learn collaboratively through language.

The short interaction from a baby clinic role-play in Table 61 below, the beginning of which was initially used to exemplify the learning of cause-effect in Section 7.2.1, also demonstrates how a more extended dialogic exchange facilitates not only the construction of technical taxonomies, but also other interwoven areas of learning, namely Cause-effect relations, Numeracy practices and Sociocultural expectations.

Table 61 Example of Interactional Opportunity (IO) in the baby clinic (BC-EYC3)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
33	Yusra (nurse)	**Now this is the thing that how much sickie she is, or anything like that**	The children have a thermometer
34	Daniel (doctor)	**How hot her is. That's how hot her is. Hurry up please** **Now give it to her**	Yusra holds the thermometer to the baby's mouth
35	Yusra (nurse)	**A lot it means**	
36	Daniel (doctor)	**Very hot so I need to be here for a hundred**	
37	Yusra (nurse)	**A hundred, a hundred days. I'll call, um shall I call her Dad?**	
38	Daniel (doctor)	**Yes**	
39	Yusra (nurse)	**Just to say she's poorly**	
40	Daniel (doctor)	**We're just going to call your Dad okay?**	Talking to the baby
41	Meggie (parent)	**He's at work actually**	
42	Daniel (doctor)	**I know**	
43	Yusra (nurse)	**Hello. The baby's at hospital. Bye**	Talking on the telephone
44	Daniel (doctor)	**Here you go. You will have to stay here for a hundred sleeps**	Talking to the baby

The extract shows Yusra, Daniel and Meggie in the baby clinic. Yusra (as the nurse) in turn 33 is providing her peers with an explanation of the thermometer. She does not use the term, but her explanation demonstrates her understanding of a thermometer within the semantic field of equipment used to check the baby's health in a baby clinic. Furthermore, she demonstrates how to use the thermometer through her actions. Daniel, (the doctor) in

turn 34 builds on Yusra's explanation of a thermometer, outlining that it measures more specifically not just 'how much sickie she is' but how hot the baby is. Yusra demonstrates how to use the thermometer and confirms the results (turn 34). Daniel interprets these results confirming that he will have to stay 'for a hundred' (to care for the baby) showing his nascent understanding of the causal relationship between a baby's temperature and her health; moreover that the severity of her illness as revealed by the thermometer, will necessitate a very long stay in the clinic. This leads to an acknowledgement in turn 36 that the baby's father should be informed by telephone. The children's blending of a face to face interaction and telephone channels suggests that they understand that different channels of communication are appropriate for different purposes. Furthermore, they understand that it is appropriate to inform the father in this type of social situation. Meggie (the mother) provides extra information about his whereabouts and the nurse (Yusra) makes the phone call in turn 42 opening and closing her telephone communication to the father in a typical manner with socially appropriate greetings.

In Table 60 and Table 61 above and in further examples that I present below, there is no conscious teaching by any of the children, nor are they presenting themselves as the 'expert' as discussed earlier, yet the children's language choices that construe the baby clinic context and other role-plays are enabling learning potential for the group and the enabling dialogue results in the co-construction of knowledge between the children. For example the children are learning about the properties of the thermometer; how it is used; the relationship between the thermometer reading, and the baby's health. I would argue that these kinds of Interactional Opportunities stimulate and support learning and, while they may be difficult to pin down, are vital to our understanding of how classroom role-play can further children's learning language, learning through language and learning about language. These serendipitous opportunities have to a certain extent been primed by the teacher introductions (as discussed earlier) yet, the extension of the potential learning is

revealed through the opportunity to role-play, and the evidence is only visible through close attention to the language in the extended dialogic peer-led collaboration.

The extract in Table 57 exemplifies Painter's (1999b) observations about the development of cause-effect relations. The children begin to learn to negotiate meanings, relationships between two notions and to justify a position to others through particular meaningful linguistic choices. This can be seen in the in-role stages where the children appear to use cause-effect relations to elaborate their own role in the unfolding role-play and justify the unfolding action as in the examples below:

> ...she's very sick <u>because</u> she's eaten loads and loads of food in my tummy (BC EYM1)

> Excuse me doctor, I've came back again <u>because</u> she's got a temperature, really bad than before (BC EYM1)

In the regulative stages, the children use the language of cause and effect to justify their adherence to the guidelines that the teachers in the introductions have set out, or justifying their request for a certain role or suggesting particular roles to other children:

> You're not allowed pizza in a cafe <u>because</u> it's not healthy... broccoli is healthy (HC-EYC2)

> I think you should be the customer <u>because</u> these ones fit you (SS-EYC3)

These delicate moments of negotiation are made possible by the fact that the nature of classroom role-play as an extended dialogic interaction is child-led. As such, the children create in a sense a first step in learning to explain, rationalise and justify their own knowledge, position and understanding of the world.

I turn now to another area of learning, the expression of decontextualised and abstract notions through grammatical metaphor. Grammatical metaphor, as I discussed more fully in Section 4.4.3 involves the manipulation of grammar, that is to say the selection of

different grammatical constructions to convey the same meaning 'a central resource for expanding the meaning potential of language' (Thompson, 2014:233). Early attempts into the understanding and linguistic expression of decontextualised and abstract concepts are important, as Torr and Simpson (2003:181) point out:

> The transition to school involves learning new registers, understanding and producing written language and interpreting oral language deployed in new ways. Metaphor is an important part of this learning, because of its central role in the construction of school based systems of knowledge and discourse.

In the data it is possible to pinpoint places where the use of decontextualised and abstract notions are facilitated by classroom role-play dialogue. The children's desire to construe the genre stages of the individual instantiations of the role-plays, means that they create possibilities for themselves and for their peers to engage with decontextualised and abstract language resulting in early attempts at grammatical metaphor and learning about language.

Professions are one example of abstract notions that must be understood and articulated in order to construe an encounter involving, for instance, a vet. The language data shows that the children relate these new abstract concepts such as the profession of 'vet' to others that they are more familiar with. For instance 'A vet is an animal doctor' (PS-EYM1). In classifying the vet in this way, the child is placing the concept of vet within a concept that they understand: a doctor. Although this is the only example of this more abstract definition of a profession in the data, it highlights the way in which the children are beginning to learn language, for example the word vet, and learn through language, in other words what this word means as a concept, and relate it semantically to other concepts, in this case a doctor. With the abstract notion of professions, the data reveals that the children are more likely to construct their understanding of the professions by linguistically making them 'do-able', that is to say, as roles that 'do something' and this is

reflected in the children's approximations of their professional roles. In the examples below, the chef is explained as the person who does the cooking, the customer as the person who sits at the cafe table and so on.

We are all cookers (HC-EYC2) – the chefs

You can be the person who sits down (HC-EYC2) – the customer

You are the sizes (SS-EYC3) – the shoe shop assistant

I'm the payer (PS-EYM3) – the cashier

In these examples, the children are relating the concepts of the roles to aspects of the role with which they are most familiar. This may be as a result of the terms being less well known to the children, than for example, a comparable term such as 'teacher'. These emerging abstract meanings (in this case of professional roles) are achieved by the children's desire to construe the role-play and their ability to draw on their linguistic resources and approximate the abstract notions. These approximations are reflections of the children's current understanding of the world using their existing linguistic resources. They are, in a sense, a step in moving towards a more distinct abstract notion, and thereby encouraging extensions of their own and others' ZPDs in new ways of meaning, which in turn lead to further learning language and learning through language.

Opportunities to create meaning with references to medical terms such as infection, temperature, weight and so on, present opportunities to engage with and experiment linguistically with these complex abstract notions. The children engage with, these notions and use their emerging linguistic capabilities to express their states, measurements and consequences. For example, the notion of temperature, how it is expressed and its implications are approximated by the doctor:

Hers very hot <u>so</u> I need to be here for a hundred (BC-EYC3)

Here the child has created an opportunity to construct new meanings, in the construal of the social encounter of the baby clinic. He has taken the opportunity to appropriate an in-role stage and has begun to experiment linguistically with the notion of temperature. This short exchange, introduced in Section 7.1.2, Table 37, demonstrates a very important point in the development of abstract understanding and expression that it appears classroom role-play offers. As in the discussion of the teacher introductions above, the physical prop (the thermometer) appears to be a hinge around which language and action is encouraged. The presentation of a physical item and the subsequent dialogue about it results in what might be described as a shift along the Cloran's (1999) cline of contextualisation, first presented in Figure 2 and Section 2.4.2 and this is demonstrated with examples in Figure 16 below.

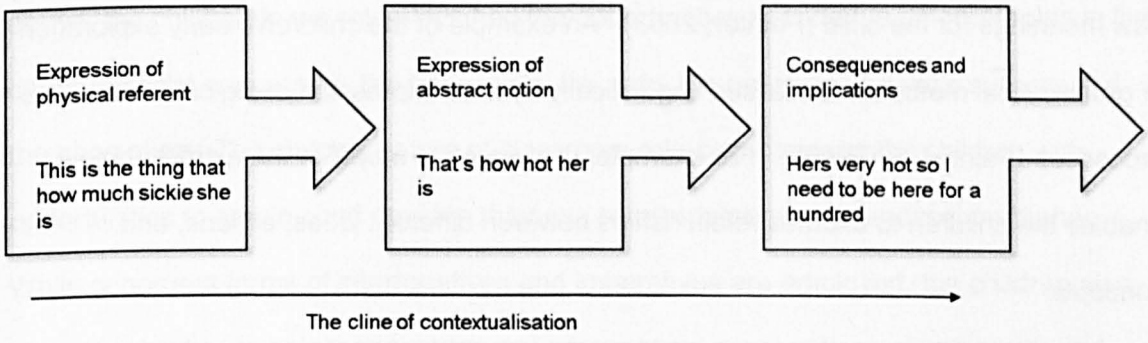

Figure 16 Moving towards abstraction

This dialogic progression demonstrates a shift from the contextualised nature of the referent (the thermometer) within a semantic space, towards a more abstract explanation of its function and abstract concept. I suggest that this language has the potential to lead them further in their development of the use of decontextualised and abstract language and understandings. The figure demonstrates how the explanation of the physical referent of the thermometer encourages what Vygotsky describes as a development in the higher mental functions that are required to process the abstract notions of temperature, the linguistic expression of this, and the implications. The 'here and now' of the classroom role-play presents the children with opportunities to make these notions 'visible' by using

the referent as part of the explanation 'that's how hot her is', and encourages the subsequent expression of the implications. The close examination of the children's linguistic choices reveals their developing understanding and expression of the abstract meanings demonstrating how these Interactional Opportunities afford potential extensions of the children's ZPD in learning language and learning through language. I would suggest that the linguistic attempts at creating decontextualised and abstract meanings are associated very closely (in this context) with the props.

The move towards the linguistic expression of abstract notions, valued in academic schooling, relies on the manipulation of ideational grammatical metaphor. The children's manipulation of their emerging linguistic and knowledge resources encourages early attempts at the use of grammatical metaphor where the same linguistic resources create new meanings for the child (Painter, 2003). An example of the children's early exploration of grammatical metaphor is realised linguistically by their expression of logical relations as processes (Painter, 2003:162). For example, the use of 'to mean' in the extracts below, enables the children to express relationships between different ideas, actions, and concepts:

> Okay she's eaten a load of food, that means you have to cut her tummy doctor. (BC-EYM1)
>
> You're eating it, that means you're the person and I'm the chef (HC-EYC3)
>
> If you count up to 60 two times that means two minutes is over (PS-EYM2)
>
> I'm the casher you know that means you've got to sit down (PS-EYM3)

Although different points are being raised in the examples above, 'that means' enables the children to express a relationship between two ideas. While it is likely that the children were familiar with 'that means' as a way of expressing a relationship, it is unlikely that they will have had the opportunity to use the expression in precisely these contexts. These examples show how the children are creatively using their existing linguistic resources to

attempt more complex meanings. The opportunities to learn through language are enabled by their desire to create the pretend world of the role-play by harnessing and extending their grammatical knowledge to create new meanings. The fact that all of these examples are part of a dialogic exchange, and part of a genre stage, demonstrates again the capacity of peer-led dialogue to facilitate learning for these children.

Where above I have shown that ideational metaphor results in shifts in the ability to express abstract meanings, interpersonal metaphor is an important skill in being able to adjust and make delicate and subtle shifts in grammar to accommodate and construe different social relationships. These different choices clearly demonstrate the children's implicit and emerging knowledge about language and their understanding of sociocultural expectations concerning particular kinds of social roles and interactions. As discussed above, the children in the role-plays had the opportunities to construe different roles in five different social encounters: the baby clinic, the cafe, the pet shop, the vet's surgery and the shoe shop. The dialogic nature of classroom role-play provided the children with opportunities to employ and develop their use of interpersonal grammatical metaphor. While congruent forms of interrogatives and imperatives are employed, the children also use opportunities to select non-congruent grammatical constructions aligning with and simultaneously construing new social contexts, 'Do you mind seeing inside his throat with that...' (BC-EYC3). Here the nurse is politely requesting assistance from the doctor. This demand for a service 'to see inside his throat' is worded as a question with a projection 'do you mind' which heightens the expression of politeness and indexes the higher status of the doctor (as I discussed in more detail in Section 6.2.2), and is expressed quite differently to a more congruent form of 'look inside his throat'. Other examples include:

> Could you please just put your baby on the scales? (BC-EYM3)
>
> May I have these shoes please? (SS-EYC2)

These non-congruent grammatical constructions mark a clear shift between the child in a regulative stage (that is speaking as themselves) and an in-role stage (speaking as a role). These utterances present Interactional Opportunities, enabled by the dialogic nature of the role-play for the children to experiment with new collaborative meaning-making opportunities as the peer group is invited to respond. These linguistic choices I suggest are connected strongly with the children's desire to construe the social encounter, and in so doing the children simultaneously present themselves and their peer group with Interactional Opportunities to experience interpersonal grammatical metaphor.

In summary, the give and take of the dialogic nature of the peer-led role-play encourages and strengthens the opportunities to create new meanings and new opportunities for learning language, learning through language and learning about language, for these 4-5 year old children sometimes building on the priming from the teacher introductions. First the uninterrupted dialogue between the children shows how they attempt to co-construct knowledge which fuels their curiosity to communicate, rather than being supplied with a 'correct' answer by the teacher. Secondly, the children employ their linguistic resources to make meanings that may be beyond their current linguistic repertoires through approximations. Thirdly, the children have the opportunities to experiment with linguistic choices in social encounters where they need to make meanings in particular ways that are different to that of a child's typical day to day field, tenor and mode choices. I turn now to considering how the use of semiotic resources other than language presents opportunities for learning in role-play.

Non-linguistic semiotic resources: props

In Chapters 5 and 6, I proposed that the way in which the children make meaning in classroom role-play is a blend of not only language choices but other semiotic resources. In this section I develop this point to argue that the semiotic resources, in particular the

props provided, are highly relevant in relation to the children's learning. In the findings discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 I argued that they have a positive contribution to the construal of the scene, and here I continue to argue for their positive contribution to learning on the basis that in the use of props the children attempt to construe particular genre stages that in turn provide children with opportunities to grapple with complex meanings beyond their usual linguistic and knowledge repertoires.

In the social encounters under investigation here, the children have opportunities to use props to, for example, measure a customer's feet, weigh a baby, pay for a meal in the cafe and so on. The physical presence of certain props (such as a tape measure) encourages the children to appropriate certain meanings in order to construe the genre stages of the social encounter. The contextualised 'here and now' of the role-play is reflected in the children's language choices as they relate to the props available. There are twenty examples across the role-play scenarios of where the children relate to a prop by its lexical term explicitly. The majority of the examples come from either the baby clinic or the vets. In the cafe there are examples of the children identifying props as particular types of food. Analysis of the data shows that the use of the relational process by the children highlights potentially new terms for them within the particular social encounter. While giving information about the noun denoting the referent in the social encounter, the children are building their semantic fields through locating equipment that is appropriate to that particular encounter and field, for example:

> This is the monitor (BC-EYM1)
>
> It's a pretend phone (BC-EYM3)

The children here have set out the term for the referent as they understand it, and are learning language. The children may already 'know' these lexical items but I suggest that the role-play provides different contexts in which these items can be used to create meaning. As I highlighted earlier, knowing the lexeme alone is not enough and as Painter

(1996:56) suggests, children learn the 'semantic space' into which the lexical items fit (as introduced in Chapter 3). In Table 62 below, I illustrate this point by showing how the children are able to introduce the tape measure as a prop into the scene (turn 79), use the tape measure appropriately, provide a measurement scale (turn 81), and respond to the implications of that measurement (turn 82) in the context of the vet's.

Table 62 'He growed 155 94 metres away' (V-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Language	Notes
79	Ryan (vet)	**Here's the measuring tape, here's the measuring tape**	Holds out the tape measure
80	Nicole (vet)	**I'm going to measure if she's growed**	Takes the tape measure to the snake
81	Ryan (vet)	**He growed 155 94 metres away**	
82	Philip (pet owner)	**That's a lot**	

I draw particular attention now to the function and relevance of the props beyond simply learning language and these potential opportunities for the children to extend their ZPDs. This point is exemplified in Table 62 above, where the children are developing their understanding of abstract concepts, numeracy practices and scales and the simultaneous linguistic expression of notions.

The presence of a 'thermometer', in the example, provided an opportunity for the children to discuss the abstract notion of temperature and begin to express these notions linguistically. Where earlier I said that the children can use the props to make abstract notions 'visible' the potential of the prop is the resulting approximation of the expression of the scale or measurement and the potential for the group to engage together in that expression. The children's language choices reveal how abstract notions become visible.

The props also appear to encourage the children's understanding of notions such as professions (also discussed earlier). There are five examples where a piece of the equipment represents a role to the children, for example,

> A plus is a nurse (BC-EYM1) – a reference to the cross on the nurse's dressing up costume
>
> This is a chef (HC-EYC3) – a reference to the dressing up clothes
>
> That's the doctor (BC-EYM1) – a reference to a particular medical kit

The linguistic ability of the children to link the prop to the profession allows them to extend their current understanding of the word, and of the world and to classify the words and meanings in different ways.

The value of the props in terms of learning appears to be that through the dialogic nature of the role-play (discussed in more detail above) the props bridge the physical items, such as a thermometer, and related abstract notions such as temperature and the expression of temperature and its consequences. In other words it allows the children to make the abstract accessible and observable as they experiment with taxonomies, meanings and the cline of contextualisation. The findings show clearly how classroom role-play as a face to face social encounter facilitates the linguistic expression of both contextual, decontextualised and abstract understandings.

The semiotic resources not only encourage meaning-making in terms of abstraction, numeracy and literacy, but learning language and learning through language in more subtle ways. I use the extract below to unpick how classroom role-play and in particular the support of the props, assists in the development of the children's sociocultural understanding of these social encounters. The extract in Table 63 sees Nicole, Philip and Ryan in the baby clinic.

Table 63 Semiotic resources in the baby clinic (BC-EYM1)

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
3	Nicole (nurse)	**What's wrong with your baby?**	Hands the stethoscope to Ryan and adjusts her headwear
4	Philip (parent)	**She's um, she's very sick**	
5	Nicole (nurse)	**What's wrong with her?**	
6	Philip (parent)	**I think she's just come out of my tummy and she's very sick because she's eaten loads and loads of food in my tummy**	
7	Ryan	*What's a cross?*	Pointing to the cross on Nicole's headwear
8	Nicole	*A plus is a nurse. Alright? Ryan? Ryan? Ryan? You need too doctor costume. You need a doctor costume.*	Nicole hands over the headwear to Ryan
9	Ryan	Where's she gone	Referring to me.
10	Nicole (nurse)	She's gone. She was supposed to go. *Because this is called the baby monitor. I got one so that Mummy knows that my baby sister (unclear)* **Doctor, doctor, doctor. Okay she's eaten a load of food, that means you have to cut her tummy doctor. I'll just take out all the food. Where's my knife? Doctor, where's my knife? Doctor where's my knife?**	'Baby monitor' is the thermometer The children are looking for the knife and holding the baby

The presence of the equipment (the stethoscope) and the dressing up clothes all contribute to the construal of the scene as discussed in Chapter 5, and also to the children's learning about the sociocultural expectations of these situations. That is to say

the children have opportunities to learn which roles have responsibility for which actions, and what happens in these types of social scenarios. The children understand that the doctor and nurse will wear some form of uniform (represented by the dressing up clothes in turns 7-8). This uniform appears to authorise them to certain privileges in the role-play area. In terms of building sociocultural awareness (learning through language) the children through their imagined social roles have the opportunities to develop a greater understanding of the nature and responsibilities of the roles. For instance, the doctors and nurses assume the main responsibility for asking the questions (94% of the time) and for carrying out any action needed in the treatment of the baby, and the parent for providing information as discussed in Section 6.2.2 in more detail. The children are thereby learning about language, that is to say what language does in these particular genre stages.

In contrast to the introduction of a prop and its value in the unfolding communication of abstraction, props are also used within the unfolding dialogue to prompt a particular grammatical construction, that of projection. The grammatical construction of projection, through 'I know' or 'I think' provides, as Torr (2000:142) suggests 'speakers with resource for expression and interpretation of thoughts themselves'. Projection occurs 17 times across the data set (although not always prompted by the use of props) projecting the children's ideas or views. As these thoughts are made explicit, learning opportunities occur, for example, when Isla-Rose is examining a dog in the vet's and says:

I think I need to put a bandage on because he's feeling dizzy (BC-EYC2)

The use of the projection in this example has presented Isla-Rose's interpretation of the situation as new information for the group. It has the function of setting Isla-Rose as the person responsible for the expression of the diagnosis and the carrying out of the treatment enabled by the scene. She has also simultaneously given herself the opportunity to express cause-effect language. I suggest that the projection has in part been activated by Isla-Rose's desire to construe that particular genre stage using the

resources available – the bandage. Here, the interactional opportunities for learning include the expression of the causal relationship between the dog's symptoms and the treatment required. Other projections are also prompted by the props.

> I think he [the dog] might have chewed his bone too much (V-EYM2)
>
> I know they [the shoes] won't fit you. (SS-EYC1)

I would suggest that these forms of projection are not only Interactional Opportunities for learning, but essential in the formation of the unfolding dialogue which in turn presents opportunities for cause-effect meanings to be voiced. The props emerge clearly as facilitating learning rather than inhibiting creativity.

Self-Repetition

Moore's (2011) review of the research into repetition highlights the links between repetition and learning language, and in particular language socialization.

> Repetition is an important resource for accomplishing social action, and thus attention to repetition helps us to appreciate the active role played by the novice in his or her own socialization. (Moore, 2011:220).

Repetition, as I have noted earlier in the thesis, in Section 2.4.2, appears to have been mainly studied in the case of the repetition of others' utterances. Here I present and discuss the findings for what I term self-repetition, that is when a child repeats their own utterances, and I consider the implications for their own and their peers' learning. There are 80 instances of self-repetition which are spread relatively evenly across the data set. The self-repetition appears to foreground new lexical items and grammatical structures, presenting the children with opportunities to learn language through their own immediate revoicing of the repeated word or utterance and for their peers to hear the repetition.

There are two different forms of self-repetition. Firstly the children repeat exactly the same utterance more than once, for example:

> What would you like to eat? What would you like to eat? (HC-EYM1)

The second type is where the children repeat an utterance with subtle lexicogrammatical shifts:

> May I buy a rabbit please? May I buy a rabbit? (PS-EYM1)
>
> Do you want to pay? Anyone want to pay? Who wants to pay for their dog or cat? (PS-EYC1)
>
> Write that down. You have to write something in there, okay? (BC-EYC3)
>
> Don't put there or they will be died, dead, died (V-EYM3)
>
> Who's the name? Who's the name? What's your baby called? (BC-EYM3)

I acknowledge that some of the self-repetition may be emphasis or repetition to get attention. However, I would argue that given the frequency of these instances of self-repetition, there is also the possibility that through self-repetition the children experiment with their linguistic choices and potentially construe subtle interpersonal changes in meaning in a context, i.e. role-play, that can accommodate the repetition. It is worth highlighting here, as I have done earlier in this thesis, that in real life versions of these scenarios, the children would not necessarily have the responsibility for engaging with these genre stages nor therefore the realisation of these particular meaning-making linguistic choices. Therefore, I suggest that these repetitions are examples of IOs as the children experiment and practise new and different lexicogrammatical choices, from which they themselves, and their peers benefit.

I suggest that these are examples of where the children are learning language, (i.e. learning grammar), learning through language and learning about language as they are potentially learning how different lexicogrammatical choices construe different contexts.

7.3.3 Section summary

In summary, possibilities for peer to peer learning occur in classroom role-play firstly through IGs where children request and offer information from and to their peers, and secondly, through co-constructed IOs arising from dialogic interaction, the deployment of other resources and self-repetition. The findings show that classroom role-play should be considered as a site for learning both for the individual and the peer group, as the children collaboratively construct meanings through their dialogic interactions (cf. Maybin, 2006). The qualitative findings presented here illustrate how the nature of classroom role-play places new demands on the children's understanding of the play social encounters and therefore the world, and the dialogic interaction encourages new linguistic expression construing new contexts which enable children to learn language, learn through language and learn about language and highlights again the interwoven nature of these aspects of learning (illustrated in Figure 15 earlier). As the children's use of language itself creates particular kinds of meaning, it cannot be treated only as a conduit, but as actually constitutive of learning.

7.4 Chapter 7 Conclusions

Chapter 7 has presented the findings and discussion to RQ2:

> What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in classroom role-play?

While not formally assessed in the classroom role-play, as a learning activity, was valued by the two teachers that participated in the study. A close examination of children's linguistic choices highlighted two key points in this study of children's learning in role-play. Firstly, it has drawn attention to the importance of children's language as data in revealing the potential for learning. Secondly, the teachers' introductions and teaching were seen to

be of huge value judging by how the children appropriated language and the use of props in the subsequent role-plays. Finally, learning was also identified within the children's extended dialogue between themselves. The children's linguistic expression during the extended dialogue could not always be considered 'grammatical', yet the meanings that the children construed were functionally appropriate and mostly socially appropriate for the social context, and in terms of broader collaborative meaning-making quite delicate and complex. I argue that close attention to the children's meaning-making highlights the learning opportunities that are created as the children creatively construe these ordinarily adult-led social encounters through role-play. A focus on meanings provides a distinct way of considering children's language that goes beyond a preoccupation with their 'grammatical correctness'.

An interactional approach involving a focus on Interactional Guidance (IGs) and Interactional Opportunities (IOs) was employed in exploring the learning opportunities that classroom role-play affords. In Section 7.2, I discussed how the teacher introductions primed the children's role-plays through IGs conveyed through IRF discursive structures and through language and other semiotic modelling. Using data from the role-plays, I provided evidence demonstrating that these children were drawn through their ZPDs as a result of the IGs. This process highlighted the strong link between the teacher introduction and the role-plays and, in turn, the potential of the teacher introductions to enrich the children's 'semantic space'. I have argued that learning new language in the teacher introductions facilitates learning through language in the role-plays where the children have the possibility of using new ways of making meaning as imagined social roles. The teachers' priming of the role-plays cannot, however, explain all the learning opportunities that are in evidence during the role-plays. In Section 7.3, the data showed that the children present themselves, and draw on each other, as 'experts'. Furthermore, serendipitous Interactional Opportunities were enabled through the child-led spontaneous co-construction of dialogue, their use of props and self-repetition.

The priming of the role-plays together with the opportunities to play out in peer-led group spontaneous interactions facilitated potential extensions of ZPDs in the key learning areas. I have presented findings that strongly suggest the children have opportunities to practise and learn new semantic fields. Secondly the children express cause-effect relationships and they extend their understanding of the 'here and now' moving to a more detailed understanding, and linguistic expression of, decontextualised and abstract meanings. Thirdly, the children absorb new literacy and numeracy practices and sociocultural understandings of the linguistic roles and responsibilities expected within particular social encounters. These findings support the claim made by Rogers and Evans in their study (introduced in Section 2.5.2) on classroom role-play in the Reception Class that 'extended periods of uninterrupted role-play would enable children to develop and demonstrate the sustained and complex narratives possible in this play range' (Rogers and Evans, 2007:163). Also it supports other studies that similarly have found children's peer-led dialogue to be of value (for example Mercer and Howe, 2012, Maybin, 2013). Most importantly it supports the suggestion that young children will learn through a blend of adult initiated activities and peer-led play (Sylva et al., 2010). I argue that the findings in this chapter have shown that classroom role-play is an ideal example where children can benefit from learning in a typical classroom interaction and further deepen that learning through their own extended dialogues with their peers.

It is clear from the discussion that what children learn (the areas of learning) overlaps with how children learn and each influences the other. As Painter suggests, there exists 'a dynamic relationship between learning through language and developing language itself' (Painter, 1996:79). That is to say in learning new language, new meanings are possible, presenting further opportunities to learn through that language and learn about language although clear boundaries between these three notions are difficult to draw. I have also demonstrated how the presence of props such as the toy thermometer enabled new

meanings, thus facilitating new learning through language. All of these opportunities are supported by the way in which the children as small peer groups collaborate dialogically, using the rich resources of the role-play area to create appropriate meanings and support each other in the three types of learning.

In terms of learning about language, I have suggested that there is huge scope for learning about language yet in this data, the teachers only draw the children's attention implicitly to the role-play as a language interaction and as such miss potential opportunities within a context that provides rich opportunities for learning about language. For example, while the teachers do set out the role-plays as a sequence of activities, they do not give specific attention to the social encounters as comprising stages or being of a particular genre. While the role-play data showed that the children have an emerging understanding of these interactions as staged events, there is, I suggest, potential for the realisation of the stages to be discussed more precisely and so to exploit more fully learning about language. Furthermore, the teachers do not draw the children's attention to the language choices that they make, nor discuss the implications of these choices in the social encounters. I return to this point in Chapter 8.

I conclude this chapter by proposing that the findings presented have demonstrated that classroom role-play facilitates learning language, learning through language and learning about language (the third to a lesser degree in this study), in ways in which previous literature has not been able to explicate so precisely. Through classroom role-play children can participate, engage and experience social encounters in ways in which they are unable to do at this stage in their lives, in the real world. This participation and engagement is realised by the children's linguistic choices and the use of props that lead to an experience that is meaningful in terms of their sociocultural awareness and enhances their academic learning through the dialogic nature of classroom role-play.

In Chapter 8 I will conclude my discussion by reflecting on my research journey, highlighting my main findings, reviewing the theoretical, methodological and analytical approach taken in this empirical work. In addition I will present, what I consider, the main implications of the research and suggest future linked research.

8 Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

The aims of this thesis were twofold: the first was to explore how children of 4-5 years construe role-play scenarios that are reminiscent of real life through their lexicogrammatical choices and other semiotic resources. The purpose of this aim was to bring a greater depth of understanding into young children's meaning-making in classroom role-play. I set out to contribute to the field of applied linguistics and further our understanding of how young children manipulate their linguistic repertoires to create complex and precise meanings which enable them to create an unfolding role-play scenario. The second aim was to investigate the opportunities for learning that classroom role-play affords young children of 4-5 years. The aim here was to contribute to the literature in Early Years education and articulate, from a linguistic perspective, the value of role-play for children in terms of learning language, learning through language and learning about language.

In this concluding chapter, I reflect on, recapitulate and critique the main points and discussions that have contributed to this study. I begin by reflecting on the research journey, and I highlight significant moments that substantially shaped the work. In Section 8.3, I summarize the key findings relating to the research questions. In 8.4, I consider the pedagogic implications for the research, and I review the approach, methodology and analysis. In 8.5, I suggest potential future research that could extend the work reported in this thesis.

8.2 *Summary of the research process*

This PhD research was driven by a curiosity about young children's meaning-making capabilities in classroom role-play which simultaneously fuelled an interest into what and how children might learn during this type of activity outside the more formal and typical teaching in the Reception Classroom.

The analytical frame of SFL was chosen for RQ1 following a successful pilot study using this approach (discussed in Section 4.2.1), and as a result of my continued interest in describing children's meaning-making at clause level and at the level of the text. The analytical process began with a focus on register (within the framework of SFL) as a way of describing the language choices that the children made in the role-plays. This point in the analysis began to highlight some interesting findings; namely that two registers and language contexts were emerging from within the overall text: in-role and regulative, as I later termed them. Two further substantial points simultaneously emerged from this early work. First, that meanings were being created through the dynamically unfolding role-play text. These meanings were being construed through what appeared to be stages reminiscent of similar real life social encounters, towards a collectively but loosely understood social goal, for example buying a meal in a cafe. The implication of this new insight was that a synoptic description of the language choices based on register alone no longer accurately captured this more dynamic meaning-making. Secondly, meanings were being co-constructed between the children within the give and take of the dialogue in the group and I wanted to be able to capture a collective contribution to the unfolding text. The notion of genre (Martin, 1992) was well positioned as a theoretical frame to conceptualize the unfolding of the children's co-constructed texts. Moreover it aligned theoretically to the existing SFL analytical frame and could exploit the existing lexicogrammatical analysis through common SFL terminology.

Alongside this shift in the development of RQ1 was the work on RQ2. My main focus from the outset on RQ2 was to understand, what and how children might be learning in their peer-led interactions during classroom role-play. However, given the teacher input in the form of a class introduction to each role-play scenario, I wanted to accommodate the potential influence of these whole class interactions in priming the role-plays. As a consequence I needed to consider what and how learning in classroom role-play could be primed by the teacher, and subsequently extended by the children themselves in a peer-led role-play. While useful terms in teaching and learning, neither the notion of mediation (Hasan, 2003) nor scaffolding (Bruner, 1978), appeared to capture the learning process that seemed to be present in classroom role-play, where the learning spanned two different types of learning events (the introduction and the role-play) and two time frames (as the actual role-play took place days later) and occurred in the context of symmetrical as well as asymmetrical relationships. What could be identified in the data were learning opportunities that stemmed from more conscious moments of teaching either in the teacher introductions or in the role-plays themselves and secondly, learning opportunities that originated from more informal and serendipitous interactions between the children in the role-plays. I therefore developed the conceptual frame of Interactional Guidance (IGs) and Interactional Opportunities (IOs), which together facilitated an 'interactional approach' to learning to better describe more conscious imparting of knowledge, and more informal and serendipitous learning opportunities. My aim is that the interactional approach captures and foregrounds learning specifically in classroom role-play in terms of i) learning from a more traditional teacher-class interaction, and ii) learning that is constructed between children as a more symmetrical informal learning process in the role-play interactions. In neither instance do I state categorically that learning has taken place, but it is the opportunity to learn that I have presented in this thesis.

As the aim was to explore not only how (as captured by the interactional approach above), but what the children might be learning, I want to highlight the development of the notion

of learning areas. The learning areas were, as I have highlighted elsewhere in this thesis, both a finding and a framing. They were conceived from what was beginning to emerge from the data analysis, and simultaneously what was highlighted in relevant language focused research (in particular work by Painter, 1999a, Cloran, 1999, Torr and Simpson, 2003, Maybin, 2006) and the National Curriculum. I wanted RQ2 to extend what we know about language and learning in these types of oral and informal peer-led interactions, and to take the opportunity to use the detailed linguistic analysis and the framing of SFL to be more specific about learning that is constructed through linguistic choices, such as the cause-effect meanings, and the move towards decontextualised meanings. In particular I was interested in learning that may support longer term academic progress, and wanted to explore if classroom role-play presented learning opportunities in these areas.

In the next section I now draw together the main findings of this empirical work in order to answer the research questions guiding this thesis:

RQ1: How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?

a) How are role-plays organised?
b) How do lexicogrammatical and other semiotic choices influence role-plays?

RQ2: What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

8.3 *Summary of key findings*

8.3.1 RQ1. How do children of 4-5 years create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play?

This thesis has shown that children co-create life-like social scenarios in the context of classroom role-play through collaboratively construing a staged interaction through quite precise lexicogrammatical choices that are both functionally appropriate and demonstrate socially and culturally sensitive language. The data from five role-play scenarios and 15 individual video recorded role-plays strongly suggests that classroom role-play is an oral genre with predictable language contexts and recognisable stages.

Based on the language patterns found in the data, I suggest that the description of classroom role-play as a genre can account for the broad typical interactional patterns found within classroom role-play. Furthermore, I propose that it is a model within which genre sub-types can be identified. In relation to the first point, in a classroom role-play genre, I have argued that there are two types of context: in-role and regulative, within which there will be two distinct types of stages, those that align to a real life goal, and those that are regulative in function. However, I have argued that all the stages, including those in the regulative context, contribute to the unfolding of the genre, and assist in the creative construal of an interaction which is reminiscent of a real life social encounter. In terms of the second point I have demonstrated that there will exist genre sub-types, and in my data I identified a Clinician Consultation (the baby clinic and the vet's scenarios) and a Service Encounter (the cafe, pet shop and shoe shop scenarios). The two genre sub-types will have in-role stages that are distinct and are relevant to the individual social goals of that type of social encounter. However, my data suggests that consistent regulative stages will appear across the genre sub-types.

In Chapter 6, drawing on the role-play interactions as a genre, I focused attention on the level of the clause and registerial choices that realised the in-role language at the level of context and register, and the specific field, tenor and mode (FTM) choices that realise individual stages. I selected particular types of analysis from the SFL tool box to explore how FTM choices influenced the role-plays (as outlined in Section 4.4.1). I demonstrated that at the level of context across the role-play scenarios, the children made different language choices in the in-role context as opposed to the regulative context. In presenting examples at the levels of FTM, I showed how the children construe the field through technical lexemes, processes and participants and by making appropriate process choices.

Lexicogrammatical choices of speech function, mood and modality were seen to be significant in the way in which the roles were construed. The findings showed that the children enacted the different imagined roles by using firstly functionally appropriate language for the stage, and secondly language that was more contextually delicate through interpersonal grammatical metaphor. These choices enabled differences in the roles in terms of social status and distance. For instance I discussed how the children subtly differentiated their language and how these choices enact the roles and contribute to the construal of the scenario. For example, a doctor's utterance of 'we need to get the blood from her tummy' (BC-EYC3) highlights the use of modalisation to speak with authority and confidence about the treatment required. Yet, a doctor utterance when speaking to a parent uses language choices to soften a command yet retaining a formal relationship, 'could you please just put your baby on the scales' (BC-EYM3).

Within mode, an investigation into the role of language, and how children employed different channels and semiotic resources other than language, demonstrated how the children draw on the props available in culturally meaningful ways. The creative use of the realistic props challenges Vygotsky (1978) in that I argue the children are creating

imaginary situations and not simply recreating memories. While Vygotskian inspired research (for example Bodrova and Leong, 2003) criticises realistic props as inhibiting creativity and development, the detailed language analysis presented demonstrates in this study that the props encourage linguistic creativity by providing opportunities to construe situations through new language choices that might otherwise not be pursued.

In summary, I argued in Chapter 5 and 6 that genre staging, lexicogrammatical and other semiotic resources contribute strongly to the way in which the scenarios are organised in the construal of the social encounter in the five types of social scenario that were recorded.

8.3.2 RQ2: What opportunities and evidence are there of learning language, learning through language and learning about language in children's classroom role-play?

One of the aims of this study was to understand the opportunities for learning language, learning through language and learning about language present within classroom role-play. These opportunities were framed in two related sites i) the teacher introductions and ii) the role-plays themselves. I proposed that learning processes can be identified linguistically and can be described in terms of Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities. For both these notions, the learning that was taking place was described through the learning areas of Semantic fields, Cause-effect relations, Decontextualisation, Sociocultural expectations and Literacy and Numeracy practices.

In focusing on the links between the teacher introductions and the children's role-plays, this study has thrown light on how learning in classroom role-play is enhanced by the introductions, and moments of Interactional Guidance, that prime the role-plays. The teacher introductions could be seen to facilitate the children's ZPD extensions through in

particular the IRF structure and the teachers' language multimodal modelling. Both linguistic constructs were found to be fruitful in priming the children's learning, and I showed extracts of data that demonstrated possible evidence of this learning through the children's appropriation of the teachers' language and concepts; for instance learning the term 'tape measure' and then using it in the role-play in an appropriate context in Table 49 and Table 50. This finding highlights something that I believe is new to the discussion on children's role-play, in that the teacher IRF structures, while at times seen as restrictive in some research (van Lier 2001, Forman, 2008), are in this context shown to be an effective way of priming the areas of learning. This leads to the suggestion that additional emphasis could be placed on these structures in the teacher introductions in order to fully exploit their pedagogic potential (and I will discuss this further in Section 8.4 below).

In the role-plays, I presented data that I argued demonstrated how the children themselves create moments of Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities. The children draw on their own understanding to offer knowledge either in response to a peer's question or spontaneously prompted by the context of the role-plays. This was demonstrated in Table 57 and the discussion of the microscope. There are two fundamental points here, firstly, the children see their peers as sources of information and 'pause' the role-play to ask questions of their peers. Secondly, the children can be seen to be co-constructing knowledge rather than being supplied with a 'correct answer'. This interaction of question and response is in contrast to the IRF structure. In the children's question and response, they must work harder to convince their peers of their position, drawing on their own knowledge and linguistic strategies to show cause-effect or causal relations between ideas. This research has shown that the opportunities for learning extend beyond simply being able to produce correct answers or a realistic and appropriate measurement (at this educational stage). Where the children's incorrect responses to their peers' questions might be seen as missed opportunities in learning, I argue that these exchanges, in themselves, encourage the children to construct knowledge

collaboratively. I suggest that together the children extend their own and their peers' ZPDs through their dialogic interaction, as exemplified by the discussion about the collar in the pet shop (Table 60) where the children were unable to retrieve the lexical item they sought. The finding of the dialogic nature of the role-play supports existing work on the importance of dialogue in children's learning. Mercer's work (for example Mercer, 2000) shows the potential in terms of learning when children collaborate. The illumination of the collaborative child-led opportunities is important because it provides evidence of the potential of small group, child-led classroom role-play to facilitate learning language, learning through language and learning about language. The findings point to the children not only learning but learning how to learn collaboratively by drawing on their own knowledge resources and co-constructing knowledge.

The opportunities for the children to develop their ZPDs in the different areas of learning spanned the different social scenarios. For instance, the learning area of numeracy spanned the five scenarios presenting the children with different ways in which meanings are made using numeracy, and learning how numeracy practices are employed by different types of roles.

Another important finding concerned the potential of the realistic props available to the children in the role-play area. I showed that the learning of new lexemes often centred on the use of a prop. This is relevant for two reasons. Firstly, I argued that, in the context of classroom, the learning of new words and their associated semantic fields should not be seen as simply 'learning new words' but as developing their understanding of overlapping semantic fields and enabling the children to extend their meaning-making potential. I showed how the introduction of a prop, for example, the tape measure in the teacher introduction, primed the children to use the tape measure and to construct stages that extended their understanding of numeracy practices. In other words, the development of new words and taxonomies facilitated further dialogic interaction which in turn enabled

opportunities to create new meanings and extend the children's ZPDs as the children blend their new and existing linguistic recourses to make new meanings in the context of the unfolding social scenario. I have argued that the new words and grammatical structures (learning language) facilitated learning through language, that is new language to learn, for example, cause and effect and the linguistic resources required to make those meanings.

The second finding in the discussion of props is that they encourage the 'making visible' of otherwise abstract concepts, such as the notion of temperature. The ability to make the abstract 'visible' offers the children opportunities to use their linguistic resources to begin to communicate complex and abstract ideas. Classroom role-play areas in the UK are furnished with realistic props, and this research has demonstrated their value in facilitating learning areas beyond simply acquiring new words, but also more abstract learning such as semantic fields, cause-effect relations and the development of abstract constructs.

This research has gone some way to more firmly bind the benefits of classroom role-play to longer term areas of academic learning through the discussion of in particular, Semantic fields, Cause-effect language, Decontextualised and abstract meanings, and Literacy and Numeracy practices. The presentation of the findings in Chapter 7 has shown that, in order to show a link between classroom role-play in the Early Years and later learning, a discussion of what children learn needs to be more abstract and precise and based on their actual language use, rather than on general observed behaviours. These findings together challenge Smidt's observation where she suggests, 'The chief implication for practitioners is to remember that where children learn primarily through play and creativity what they learn cannot be determined in advance' (Smidt, 2011:74). This research has shown that it is possible to predict the potential opportunities for learning in classroom role-play and how children learn. Furthermore I have shown that the types of learning can be linked to the skills that are highly valued in academic learning.

8.4 *Implications of findings for classroom practice*

Language choices have been brought to the fore in this study of children's meaning-making and learning. Informal, spontaneous language choices highlight the richness and complexity of children's language (cf. Maybin, 1996, 2013). I acknowledge that for linguists this may not seem a particularly novel idea. However, this study bridges linguistics and Early Years' education, and detailed language choices are a less common focus in understanding children's interactions and learning in the educational literature where observations appear to be the main method of collecting evidence of learning (for example Smidt, 2011, Harries, 2013). The reasons for this I recognise may be due to the complexity of the data collection and analytical methods required in a linguistic study (and I return to this point in Section 8.5). I do not suggest that practitioners are unaware of children's language capabilities, however I have been able to capture and analyse fifteen 10-20 minute child-led interactions that would have otherwise been mainly 'unheard'. I have analysed the language of these otherwise 'unheard' interactions in detail, which I acknowledge is time consuming for the practitioner. As a result, it seems to me that the implications of these new insights into children's meaning-making and learning at this detailed level are most important for practice. There are three main points that I will draw attention to in relation to the implication for practice: the potential of the teacher introductions, the significance of the areas of learning and the profile of classroom role-play as a learning resource.

While the teachers in the school I worked with provided introductions to the role-play themes, an unanswered question remains around how exactly children benefit from the complete activity, i.e. the teacher introduction and the role-plays. The strong link between the teacher introductions and the children's role-plays themselves has implications for these whole class interactions. Given the findings presented in Chapter 7, I have argued that the teacher introductions, using the IRF structures and language modelling, hold

significant potential value for the children's subsequent role-plays (Bodrova and Leong, 2003). Where other large scale research (Sylva et al., 2010) has suggested an approach in Early Years that combines adult-led and child-led activities I have shown how classroom role-play is one potential Early Years activity of this nature.

From the data I have shown that the children already have a sense of the need to construct stages in order to achieve a particular goal. Motivated by this finding, I suggest that incorporating the idea of these stages more explicitly into the teacher introductions could further enhance the subsequent role-plays. That is to say, the children may become more aware of the individual stages that constitute a particular scenario. This could serve to bring greater emphasis to the stages which I have shown to be more weakly developed by the nature of more congruent language choices. An introduction that builds in the notion of genre as a series of goal directed stages would encourage not only learning language and learning through language but additionally place more emphasis on learning about language (in age appropriate terms), which I have shown to be mainly only implicit at present. I suggest that there could be potential for the children to extend their ZPDs in both the whole class interaction and the role-plays. I discuss the potential for future research in this area below.

While promoting the notion of genre, I do not advocate a rigid structure to be applied to the children's role-plays. A highly structured teacher introduction to the extent suggested by Bodrova and Leong (2006), I argue could quash the creativity and spontaneity of the interaction, potentially reducing the serendipitous Interactional Opportunities, which I have demonstrated are very important in the children's learning. As I have argued that all the contexts provide opportunities to learn, an attempt to 'over encourage' the children into a particular theme might eliminate the enhancing utterances or reduce the regulative context, both of which provide important dialogic opportunities.

The second point in the discussion of the implications for practice is the areas of learning illuminated from the data. The presence of role-play in Reception Classrooms is, as Wood suggests 'vulnerable to the top down influences of prescriptive policy directives' (Wood, 2009:32). This vulnerability, I suggest is as a result of a lack of understanding of the value of classroom role-play at a detailed linguistic level, and the difficulty in clarifying a relationship between role-play and longer term academic success. I have shown that the value lies in the complexity of the role-play language which thus far has not been visible. The areas of learning, that have been illuminated in the children's role-play can be seen to bridge more 'common sense' understandings, such as what to expect in a typical social encounter in a shop, and more 'formal' academic learning. Using the children's actual language I have been able to identify areas of learning that are more difficult to pinpoint as they are embedded in the language structures used. These areas I argue, could be used to raise the profile of classroom role-play in the Reception Class as a learning resource that encourages early foundations of academic learning through the extended dialogue that I have found to be present in the symmetrical interactions.

The final point I want to make in relation to the implications for practice is highlighted by the way in which this study has analysed and presented the language data as meaning-making. A focus on meaning-making through the areas of learning in the discussion and language extracts presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, demonstrates a level of language capability that is little understood or celebrated in either educational research or the media. As I outlined in Section 2.5.2, children's language attracts much attention, and in particular when it is deemed as not meeting an expected standard. Resources widely available on the internet reveal a simplistic formalist description relying on descriptions of language that focus mainly on 'grammatical correctness' (Section 2.5.2). There are two points I want to make here in relation to a preoccupation with children's language simply at a structural level that have potentially extensive implications for the general understanding of children's language, and educational policy. Firstly, when language

'errors' dominate the headlines as they do, and simplistic views of language are reflected in policy documentation, I suggest that this highlights a lack of understanding of how children create meaning. Secondly, the complex dialogic exchanges and sophisticated attempts at meaning-making between children are largely ignored, as a result of the focus on correctness. Much more complex and delicate shifts in language choice have been presented throughout this thesis, and to focus on, for example, the incorrectly formed past tense as in the example below, misses a more subtle point.

> I writ the baby has infection. The baby has infection, I writ that for you. (Yusra BC-EYC3)

This utterance is the nurse's appropriate response to the doctor's earlier question 'what's the matter?' which together construes a stage of Eliciting/ stating problem (as discussed in Chapter 5). The nurse is communicating something important about the health of the baby orally, supported by a written document (previously presented as Figure 14). This communication leads to the doctor and nurse checking the baby and diagnosing other health problems. The implications of this attention to detail brings a focus on meaning foregrounding the complex and co-constructed nature of these role-play interactions, rendering comments on 'grammatical mistakes' as less significant in relation to the broader meaning-making. I suggest this points to a positive view of children's language that can be used as a basis for more explicit language discussion, thereby extending the children's implicit knowledge into explicit knowledge about language, further preparing them for later schooling.

The findings have implications therefore for practice in the Reception Class. Role-play is presently a resource in the Reception Classroom in England (as first discussed in Section 2.5) but, as previously highlighted, competes with more traditional literacy and numeracy activities. On the one hand, the EY documentation appears to signal the value of play, yet on the other hand, for the children at the end of the 'birth to five' curriculum of Early Years

(that is, the academic year under exploration here), their impending transition to 'formal' learning in Year 1 signals quite strongly that 'play' does not contribute to this learning (as discussed more fully in Section 2.5). This dichotomy may be a result of simplistic descriptions of language as discussed, rather than the detailed analysis required in order to demonstrate the value of role-play as a site for learning. The implications of the research reported in this thesis have the potential to raise the profile of classroom role-play during this transitional year between the EY curriculum and Year 1 (Key Stage 1).

This study has chosen to focus on language that construes particular 'life-like' social scenarios yet this decision was not intended to prioritise this type of role-play. On the contrary, what I hope to accomplish is the promotion of all role-play in Early Years education including the fantastical and completely fictional.

8.5 Review of approach, methodology and analysis

It is important in all research to be able to review its strengths and weaknesses. Such a review offers valuable insights to myself as a researcher, and other future researchers in the area, not only in terms of the findings but also in terms of methods and analytic frames that can be further tested and developed. In this section I will review the decision to use video and audio recordings, the scope of the research, the influence of the SFL approach and genre as a key construct, and finally the interactional approach to learning which I used to generate the analytic constructs of the learning areas, and the IGs and IOs.

Data collection methods: video and audio recordings

The video and audio recordings as the primary data collection methods were found to provide immensely rich linguistic data. Video recordings provided the possibility to be able to analyse the way in which children's language choices interacted with other

resources within the role-play area to extend our understanding of classroom role-play as a richly resourced environment where semiotic resources are exploited creatively as part of role-play. Additionally it was possible to link the children's use of specific resources, i.e. a particular prop, to the particular utterances. Without these data collection methods, the analysis leading to the insights discussed would not have been possible. While the use of video and audio recordings is no longer 'ground breaking' in research, the use of recordings in this study has highlighted an important point: the ability to access the detailed linguistic and other semiotic choices, through the use of video and audio, has enabled insights that other data collection methods would not have been able to achieve.

The scope of the research

There are both strengths and weaknesses in the scope of the research. I have presented two small corpora taken from two Early Years classrooms in a single school. I made a decision to carry out an in-depth analysis of these two corpora, and as such, the limitations of the study are its small-scale nature, which reveals perhaps a unique rather than a generalisable set of features. However, there is strength in the detail of the language examples and the discussion of patterns found. Even with a small corpus such as this, I found that the breadth of the analysis could have been further refined. For instance an even more detailed analysis could be undertaken on a smaller corpus, in particular in respect to the interpersonal aspect had time permitted, and I return to this point in Section 8.6 below.

For the role-play corpus I selected 15 recordings that exhibited the children switching between enacting a role and speaking as themselves. The reason for this selection was to focus on the children's language when playing an imagined role, as discussed in Section 4.2. However, there were other recordings that did not fit this profile and where less of the interaction focused around the construction of the social scenario. As a result,

I do not present the analysed corpus as necessarily representative of what typically happens in classroom role-play. In some of the recordings the children played, but did not 'role-play'. In others, the children subverted the theme of the role-play to, for example getting married, or 'mums and dads'. The research questions motivated the selection of the types of role-plays chosen, yet there remains huge potential in the other role-plays as yet unexplored.

As discussed in Section 4.4.4, a further limitation of the study may be the lack of opportunity for a recoding of the complete data sets and therefore also a full inter-rater reliability check. However coding decisions were discussed regularly with the supervisory team and reviews of the coding were carried out throughout the data analysis phase.

Systemic Functional Linguistics

Based on the findings revealed by SFL in the pilot project, my intention had always been to use SFL as the theoretical and analytical lens in this doctoral research. I began, as I outlined in Section 8.2 by building a description of the children's language choices at the level of the clause. While this was revealing, the decision to use genre as a complementary construct to register has enabled a far greater depth in description of the children's interaction. The detailed SFL linguistic analysis was able to foreground subtle variations in language choice that substantiated the value of bringing language to the centre of a discussion of children's meaning-making and learning.

Based on informal observations made in the classroom and the video recordings, it appeared that for the majority of the children role-play was an enjoyable activity. In addition certain scenarios were more interesting and engaging than others (and I explore this point in more detail in Section 8.6 below). However, I rely on the observations to be able to make this tentative claim. In addition, while I carried out interviews of the

teachers, I did not seek the parents' views. Although I did not set out to investigate perspectives on role-play, the research of practices and perspectives typically falls outside SFL analysis (Coffin and Donohue, 2012). However, on reflection, these more 'ethnographic' aspects would have supported the work and brought further interesting dimensions to the SFL based text analysis.

My realisation of the importance of genre emerged relatively late in the data analysis and, as a result, a decision was made to analyse the first line of the stage only and not the complete stage (as already discussed in Section 4.2.2). I therefore offer this analysis with the acknowledgement that analysis was not completed of each stage. However, in defence of this approach, I maintain that the initial utterance provides the potential for a new stage, whether or not it is taken up by the other children or is developed. The lack of development in itself would be useful to understand, although there has not been space or time to develop this in the current study.

Bringing the notion of genre to the complex spontaneous oral interaction of classroom role-play is novel and open to potential debate. I have used known and accepted terminology from SFL genre studies, but I have also proposed a deviation in the way in which the classroom role-play genre is theoretically conceptualised. In so doing I have demanded that genre as a construct be responsive to the embedded and complex nature of spoken language present in a classroom role-play interaction. I have argued that within this particular oral genre there are two interwoven contexts and registers that each have their own staging of which one (the regulative) projects the other (the in-role). Not all the stages will be present in every interaction, but I have shown in the data that a selection of stages from the two contexts will be present and some of these will cluster. I argue that the two contexts and stage types in combination is indexical of the classroom role-play genre. From the data in this research, I am convinced of the value of genre for analysing this type of interaction. It has implications for our understanding of children's interaction in

classroom role-play from a detailed linguistic perspective, using SFL concepts that foreground delicate aspects of meaning-making. Furthermore, I have argued that the construct of genre can be used to account for the typical interactional language patterns found within classroom role-play; the genre sub-types of social encounters (in the case of the data here: Clinician Consultation and Service Encounter), and the unique instantiations of each role-play. It can, I suspect, provide a framework for the description of other types of role-play and it furthers the work by Hoyte et al. (2014) and their identification of oral language genres with young children. Furthermore, the theoretical implications of describing classroom role-play as a genre give value to oral genres (and spoken language more generally) in providing foundations for later academic learning.

While my use of the concept of genre enables me to theoretically conceptualise meaning-making in classroom role-play and to explain how children co-create the social scenario of the role-play, a further advantage of using this concept is that genre is already strongly associated with pedagogy with a well-established place in the teaching of writing in schools (Coffin, 2006, Martin and Rose, 2008) and is developing in the tertiary context (Gardner and Nesi, 2013, Coffin and Donohue, 2014). Less extensive, however, is the use of genre in the teaching of oral skills which might be attributed to a lack of understanding about how children's oral language can support the development of their academic skills. A newly identified oral genre offers a fresh perspective to the teacher input into the classroom interaction (as discussed above) and more generally to the value of oral interaction in the classroom.

The value of genre in the context of children's language and learning was highlighted by the observation made by Martin and Rose's presented in Section 4.4.3 where they draw attention to the value of understanding how typical interactions take place through recognisable patterns of meaning. In the context of children's role-play this can be taken to mean how the children understand the 'real life' unfolding of a social interaction. While

I do not challenge the value of this day to day knowledge, I have argued that classroom role-play is an environment where children can engage and co-create social situations for which they do not (as yet) have responsibility and thereby use language that stimulates more formal academic learning. I argue that simulating a Clinician Consultation can powerfully support the children's emerging understanding of the language (register) and the resulting type of social interaction (genre). By implication, children have the opportunities to be responsible for co-creating and negotiating different and more complex linguistic scenarios as the doctor and parent or vet and pet owner. More broadly, I suggest that illuminating the generic organisation of classroom role-play also allows teachers a way of understanding the learning opportunities it offers, explaining the language patterns involved and isolating certain elements for teaching purposes.

The combination of the theoretical and analytical approach of Systemic Functional Linguistics with the sociocultural Vygotskian construct of the ZPD which has underpinned this research, has proven to be successful in exposing the complexity of the language contexts and registers that make up the classroom role-play genre and the children's sophisticated language manipulation that realises the individual stages. I believe that there is strength in applying this approach to other educational contexts, in particular where spoken language is of interest.

The interactional approach to learning

I adopted an interactional approach to learning in classroom, considering the role-play in terms of moments of Interactional Guidance and Interactional Opportunities. These were found to be intricately and dynamically interconnected: Interactional Guidance may spark Interactional Opportunities which in turn stimulates learning across the learning areas. Drawing on Hasan's (2003) concept of visible and invisible mediation, and Bruner's (1978) concept of scaffolding, an interactional approach to learning is presented as a productive

way in which to frame the learning that happens in classroom role-play. As I have discussed elsewhere in this thesis, neither Hasan's nor Bruner's concepts appeared to articulate the learning processes that were happening in the classroom role-play, nor account for the complete learning event.

The strength of the interaction approach I have developed is firstly the focus on learning (as opposed to teaching) which places the child rather than the adult as the focus of the investigation. The approach has been used to highlight learning in quite a complex, but broadly typical classroom interaction. It has highlighted the strong link between the types of learning that take place in and span two related sites: the teacher introductions and the subsequent role-play. Furthermore, it considers learning in two different types of interactions, one teacher led and 'formal', one child-led and 'informal', with the first priming the second. Finally, and in my view most importantly for this research, it has drawn attention to the serendipitous opportunities where 'formal' and 'academic' learning can occur in 'informal' oral interactions between children.

8.6 Future research

The possibilities for research into children's meaning-making and learning through role-play are vast. The study has demonstrated the potential contribution that an SFL analysis can bring to understanding children's meaning-making. Further research has the possibility to focus on, and span, the fields of linguistics, and early educational and childhood studies. However, as a continuation of the narrative I have started to present in this work, I will outline four potential empirical research proposals that would build directly on this existing work. Additionally I present a wider suggestion for empirical research into children's role-play.

In terms of learning, I proposed that classroom role-play could be seen as comprised of two learning events: the teacher introductions and the role-plays themselves. This idea was inspired by the strong links I showed were present between the teacher introductions and the children's peer group simulations. Where this study has applied the notion of genre to the children's role-plays, I am curious about genre as an organising feature of the introductions. While I did not consider the teacher introductions in terms of a staged interaction, there were broad organising features, such as introducing the background, talking about the equipment, introducing the roles and so on. In response, I tentatively suggest that the teacher introduction may also be a genre in its own right. Furthermore, given the links between the introduction and the role-play, it is possible that the complete interaction might be described as a curriculum macrogenre (Christie, 1999), where the learning event spans more than one time-frame.

A second avenue of research building on the discussion here is around further exploring the potential of regulative language in terms not only of its value in enabling the in-role context but also in terms of learning. With the focus of this study being in the first instance, on the children's meaning-making in classroom role-play, I selected role-plays that were comprised primarily of the in-role context. Therefore I suggest that an interesting next step in the study of children's role-play would be to analyse the language from role-play recordings where there is predominately language in the regulative context, or where the role-play genre was not instantiated and the children simply 'played'. This focus would illuminate meaning-making and learning in role-plays that might otherwise be deemed less 'successful'. Furthermore it would illuminate points of pedagogy concerning whether certain social scenarios were more interesting for children or more productive in terms of opportunities for learning.

This study deliberately focused on real life social scenarios. However, I do not elevate this type of role-play over others as more valuable. Further interesting work could employ

the methodology and SFL analytical frameworks to fantasy role-play. Children's spoken language has been the focus of this thesis, and through the empirical work, I have attempted to raise the profile of classroom role-play interaction by linking the role-play interaction to learning and skills that are prized in 'formal' education through the learning areas. One broad contribution of this research has been to draw attention to role-play in terms not only of its educational value but also in our understanding of children's rich emerging knowledge of language and how they use it in role-play. It would be an important extension of this work to apply SFL notions of register and genre to the study of children's spontaneous spoken language in other informal classroom interactions in play. In the Early Years classroom the children have time to play with, for example, sand, in water, outside, with cars, dinosaurs, jigsaws and an SFL focused linguistic study could reveal intricate ways in which the children construct meaning through these other play resources. It is important to understand how spoken language resources and small group activities such as role-play and other forms of play, can support the other more traditionally framed 'formal learning' in Early Years. Addressing these issues could reduce the tension present between play and more 'formal learning' at this educational stage.

During the analysis, the interpersonal aspect emerged for me as particularly interesting. The exploration into how the children are able to enact adult social roles through their language could be fruitfully extended. I have been able to demonstrate how the children's linguistic choices point to their emerging understanding of language and the world. An extension of the work presented here would be to extend the analysis using Exchange Structure (Berry, 1981, 2015). Exchange structure would illuminate in even greater depth the delicate negotiation between the roles and how the children are able to accomplish the goals of the individual exchanges at a very detailed level. It would bring a greater understanding to the nature of children's dialogue in the context of role-play and children's informal language more generally.

Finally, and more broadly, there are other avenues of research that have not been pursued due to space and time, such as the influence of gender, the significance of the relative ages of the children, the influence of different languages that the children bring with them, whether and how friendship groups affect the unfolding role-play. Questions around these areas remain unanswered.

8.7 Concluding remarks

The empirical work presented in this doctoral thesis was sparked by a chance recording of a 5 year old boy engaged in classroom role-play. His ability to shift from playing in the classroom to 'being' a vet struck me as simultaneously fascinating and worthy of further study. While I am satisfied that I have made some progress in revealing how this was achieved, I am convinced that this is only a first step in the potential for this field of research and in particular for the insights that can be brought through SFL genre analysis and a sociocultural perspective on the consideration of classroom role-play as a genre through which children learn language, learn through language and learn about language.

In a detailed focus of language it is perhaps easy to become engrossed in, and distanced from the captivating, creative, and sometimes comical interaction that is children's role-play, and I conclude with an extract from the data where Poorly the baby comes to the clinic.

Table 64 Naming the baby

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
6	Ishaan (parent)	**The baby is called uhh...**	Looks to Jasmine and Melissa and shrugs his shoulders as though he wants help thinking of a name
7	Jasmine (doctor)	**Check the baby because it's poorly**	
8	Ishaan (parent)	**Poorly, it's called poorly?**	
9	Melissa (nurse)	**Poorly. P**	Melissa starts to write Poorly on the sheet. P – as in the sound
10	Ishaan (parent)	**Poorly is its name** **P O L E**	Ishaan sounds out P O L E for Poorly
11	Jasmine (doctor)	**Okay Poorly. I'm going to check your tummy. Let's see, yes good.**	Talking to Poorly

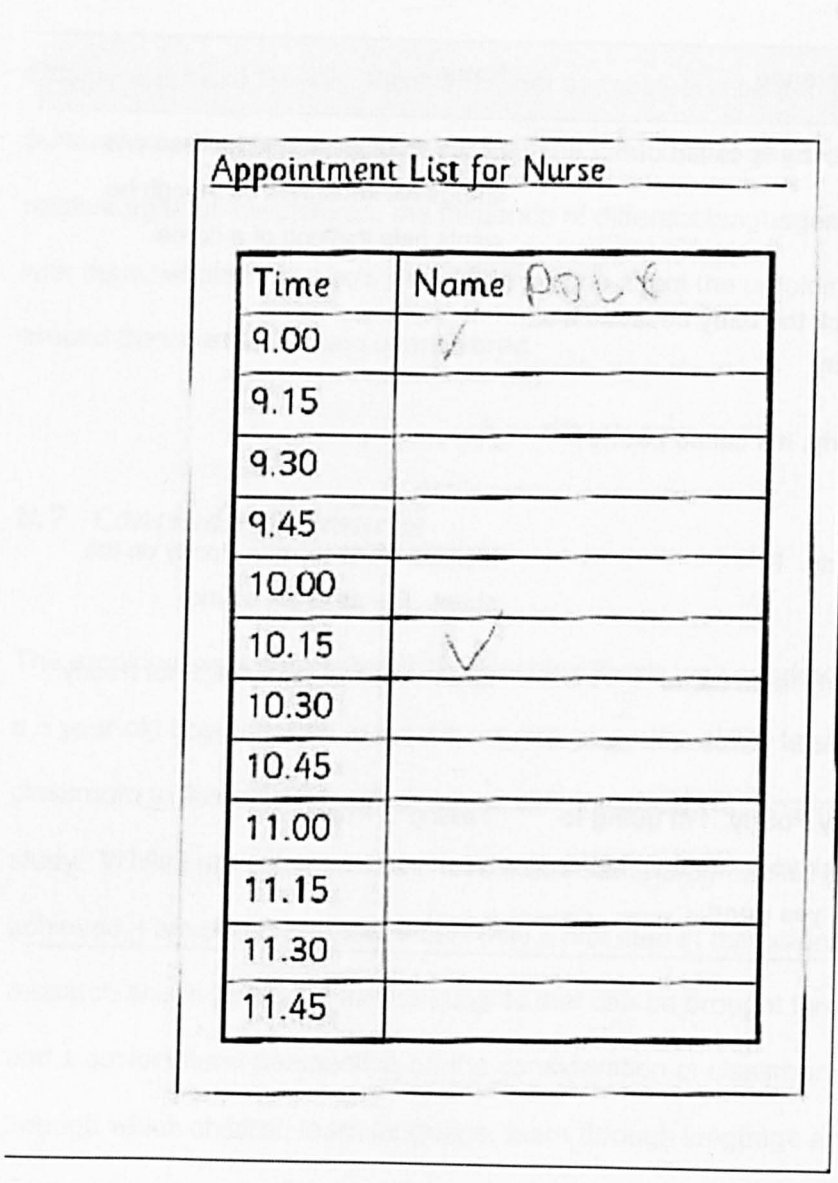

Figure 17 Appointment sheet for 'Pole' the baby

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Appendices

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I. Glossary of Terms

Term	Related term	Explanation	Examples from data (where appropriate)
Causal relations		Result, reason and purpose (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:256), expressed linguistically by specific conjunctive relations.	Be nice to him please because it's really poorly….'
Genre		A theoretical abstraction to describe a way of using language that corresponds to, and construes, the stages required to achieve a particular social goal in either spoken or written language, 'register plus communicative purpose' (Thompson 2014:42)	
Grammatical Metaphor		'…variation in the expression of a given meaning, rather than variation in the meaning of a given expression'(Taverniers, 2003:7)	
	Ideational grammatical metaphor	Commonly expressed through nominalisation in written texts.	

Term	Related term	Explanation	Examples from data (where appropriate)
	Interpersonal grammatical metaphor	Where non-congruent choices are made between the speech function and the realisation of mood.	Do you mind seeing what's inside his throat with that? (BC-EYC3)
Metafunctions:	Ideational:	Reveals and describes how the world is represented through language	
	Interpersonal:	Explains how relationships are built and maintained through language.	
	Textual:	Explains how a message is coherent through different linguistic devices.	
Modality		What the modality system does is to construe the region of uncertainty that lies between 'yes' and 'no'.' (Halliday, 2004:147)	
	Modalisation	Associated with the speech functions of statements and questions and denotes :	
		probability e.g. possibly, probably, I think, I know	I need to stay here for a hundred sleeps
		usuality e.g. sometimes, always	I think she's just come out of my tummy
	Modulation	Associated with the speech functions of offers and commands and denotes obligation e.g. allowed to, has to, must	You have to press this button.

<table>
<tr><th>Term</th><th>Related term</th><th>Explanation</th><th>Examples from data (where appropriate)</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>readiness e.g. willingly, eagerly</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Mood</td><td></td><td>The grammatical constructions that realise the speech functions</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Declarative</td><td>Subject – Finite

Declaratives congruently realise statements (see speech function)</td><td><table><tr><td>You</td><td>have</td><td>a baby</td></tr><tr><td>Subject</td><td>Finite</td><td></td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Interrogative</td><td>Finite – Subject

Interrogatives congruently realise questions (see speech function)</td><td><table><tr><td>Can</td><td>I</td><td>be the doctor?</td></tr><tr><td>Finite</td><td>Subject</td><td></td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Imperative</td><td>Finite

Imperatives congruently realise commands (see speech function)</td><td><table><tr><td>Check</td><td>the baby</td></tr><tr><td>Finite</td><td></td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>Participant</td><td></td><td>the human or non-human involved in the clause. Also known as subject and object in traditional linguistics. May be realised by a pronoun or nominal group.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Process</td><td></td><td>The part of a clause realised by a verbal group. Also known as verb in traditional linguistics.</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Term	Related term	Explanation	Examples from data (where appropriate)
	Process Types	Material – denotes action or doing.	I need to measure her
		Relational – denotes being, having.	A vet is an animal doctor
		Verbal – denotes speaking/ verbalising.	I said you can't get this one
		Behavioural – denotes behaviours	No he growed 155 94 metres away
		Mental – denotes thinking, wanting, cognition etc.	I think you should be the customer
		Existential – introduces 'a participant into the text' (Martin, Matthiessen and Painter, 2010:35), through there is.....	There is a lot of money
Register		Language choices that construe a particular context realised by three variables – Field, Tenor and Mode	
	Register Analysis	The analysis of the grammatical resources of field, tenor and mode	
Register Variables	Field	Field aligns with the ideational metafunction and is the aspect of Register which construes the representation and experience in a particular social context. The	

Term	Related term	Explanation	Examples from data (where appropriate)
		lexico-grammatical features highlighted within field are participants, processes, circumstances (not explored in this study)., technical terms	
	Tenor	Tenor aligns with the interpersonal metafunction. The lexico-grammatical features which realise tenor are speech function, mood and modality	
	Mode	Mode aligns with the textual metafunction and is realised through the system of cohesion (reference, ellipsis, substitution. Included also are features of language that are linked to the representation of the text – i.e. written or spoken, the channel. Role of language highlights whether the verbal (linguistic) action is carrying all of the meaning-making and language is 'constitutive' or some of the meaning and language is 'ancillary' to the material (non-linguistic action)	
Speech functions		describe the communicative functions in language exchanges realised by mood structures	
	Statement	'giving' information	The baby's at hospital because she's sick
	Offer	'giving' goods and services	Here's some medicine for your baby

Term	Related term	Explanation	Examples from data (where appropriate)
	Command	'demanding' goods and services	Give me that
	Question	'demanding' information	How many sleeps does she have to stay?
Transitivity:		Grammatical resource for construing our experience of goings on. (Martin et al., 2010:98)	

II. *Early Years areas of learning*

	Areas of learning	**Text from EYFS profile**
1	Communication and language	development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
2	Physical development	involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
3	Social development	involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
4	Literacy	development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
5	Mathematics	involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
6	Understanding the world	involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
7	Expressive arts and design	involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Source: Department for Education (2014:5)

III. HREC Confirmation

The Open University

From	Dr Duncan Banks Chair, The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee
Email	duncan.banks@open.ac.uk[1]
Extension	59198
To	Sarah Jane Mukherjee, FELS
Subject	*"A systemic functional linguistic exploration of 4-5 year-old children's meaning making in classroom role play."*
Ref	HREC/2012/1320/Mukherjee/1
Red form Submitted	14 December 2012
Date	17 January 2013

Memorandum

This memorandum is to confirm that the research protocol for the above-named research project, as submitted for ethics review, is **approved** by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee. I would like to congratulate you on such a high quality application.

Please make sure that any question(s) relating to your application and approval are sent to Research-REC-Review@open.ac.uk quoting the HREC reference number above. We will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible so that your research is not delayed in any way.

At the conclusion of your project, by the date that you stated in your application, the Committee would like to receive a summary report on the progress of this project, any ethical issues that have arisen and how they have been dealt with.

Regards,

Duncan Banks

Dr Duncan Banks
Chair OU HREC

[1] please note the change in email address

IV. Parent information letter

The Open University

January 2013

Dear Parent/ Guardian

I am a doctoral researcher at the Open University investigating children's language use in role-play. Ashbrook School has kindly agreed for me to carry out my research in Early Years and I am writing to request your permission for your child to take part in this study. The purpose of the study is to investigate how the children speak to each other during role-play and how this helps their language learning (my study will not assess language skills). In order to do this I plan to video small groups of children while they are role-playing in the home corner.

As the children ordinarily have time playing in the home corner, there should be no disruption to their normal routine in class. The children will be recorded in the home corner as the teachers have set it for that week and the children will be free to play and leave the role-play area as they would normally. None of the children will wear microphones and the video will be fixed on a tripod in the corner of the room.

The videos will be stored in a private area on an OU secure server. The videos will not be accessible via the Internet. Examples of language will be used in my PhD thesis and I may want, in the future, to use short video clips and information from the recordings, in connected academic research presentations or publications. The names of the children, teaching staff and school will be changed so identification will not be possible.

Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary and as parent/ guardian you have the right to refuse for your child to take part in this research. I plan to carry out a pilot study on two days during the week commencing 25th February. The video recording for the main study will be on two days each week from the 18th March and continue into the summer term. Your consent may be withdrawn up until the end of this term as this will

be the point at which I start the language analysis. If you withdraw consent then any video and audio recordings with your child will be deleted. The children also have the right to withdraw from the study and if, on the day they do not want to be recorded they will undertake other normal school activities.

The Open University Human Ethics Committee has approved this research. If you have any questions please contact me (sarahjane.mukherjee@open.ac.uk), or your child's class teacher. Should you have any concerns about any part of this study you may also contact my supervisor Dr Janet Maybin (j.maybin@open.ac.uk).

If you are happy for your child to be recorded via video, for their language to be analysed and for this information (including short video clips) to be used for my PhD thesis and possible future academic research presentations and publications, please complete and sign the form attached.

Many thanks for your time.

Sarah Jane Mukherjee

Doctoral Researcher

cc. Head Teacher

Dr Janet Maybin

Professor Caroline Coffin

V. Consent Form

Study into children's use of language in role-play

Parent/ Guardian Consent

The Open University

I ..... (name), give my consent for my child .....(name)

to be video-recorded as part of SJ Mukherjee's PhD study into children's use of language in role-play.

I understand that stretches of language taken from the recordings will be quoted in SJ Mukherjee's PhD thesis and may be used in future academic research presentations and publications.

I understand that I may withdraw my consent until the end of the summer term 2013 and data collected from the child up to that point will be discarded.

☐ I agree that images may be used in SJ Mukherjee's PhD thesis and short video clips may be used in future academic research presentations and publications (please tick).

Signature .....

Date .....

VI. CRB Disclosure

Enhanced Disclosure

Page 1 of 2

disclosure

Disclosure Number 001325658149

Date of Issue: 11 JUNE 2011

Applicant Personal Details

Surname: MUKHERJEE

Forename(s): SARAH JANE

Other Names: [redacted]

Date of Birth: [redacted]

Place of Birth: [redacted]

Gender: FEMALE

Employment Details

Position applied for:
VOLUNTEER PARENT HELPER

Name of Employer:
[redacted]

Countersignatory Details

Registered Person/Body:
MOUCHEL BUSINESS SERVICES MILTON KEYNES LTD

Countersignatory:
RACHAEL MILLER

Police Records of Convictions, Cautions, Reprimands and Warnings

NONE RECORDED

Information from the list held under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002

NONE RECORDED

ISA Children's Barred List information

NONE RECORDED

ISA Vulnerable Adults' Barred List information

NOT REQUESTED

Other relevant information disclosed at the Chief Police Officer(s) discretion

NONE RECORDED

Enhanced Disclosure

This document is an Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate within the meaning of sections 113B and 115 of the Police Act 1997.

THIS DISCLOSURE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY

Continued on page 2

PO Box 165, Liverpool, L69 3JD Helpline: 0870 90 90 844

VII. Transcription details

Children's role-plays

Scenario	**Group**	**Recording time (min,sec)**	**Word count of transcription**
Baby Clinic	EYM1	15,43	887
	EYM3	16,57	1,157
	EYC3	14,42	1,162
Cafe	EYC2	17,22	1,132
	EYC3	19,16	1,438
	EYM1	17,54	683
Pet shop	EYM1	14,44	1,218
	EYM2	15,10	1,719
	EYM3	13,28	1,524
Vet's	EYC1	10,48	934
	EYM1	16,37	1,147
	EYC2	17,36	976
Shoe shop	EYC2	14,13	686
	EYC3	18,30	2,000
	EYC1	11,47	1,315
Total		3hrs, 54 mins, 34 sec	17,978

Teacher introductions

Scenario	Early Years Cook		Early Years Masters	
	Word count	Recording time (min,sec)	Word count	Recording time (min,sec)
Baby Clinic	2,373	16,35	2,085	25,28
Cafe	1,527	10,20	1,530	16,36
Pet shop	2,618	18,46	1,942	20,16
Vet's	2,113	16,11	2,201	21,28
Shoe shop	2,139	14,20	1,416	14,05
Total	10,768	1hr, 16mins, 12 secs	9,174	1hr, 37mins, 53secs

VIII. 'Other' utterances

Out of role	Sample language
Classroom expectations	We need to tidy up you know (BC-EYC2) You're not allowed there (PS-EYM2) I'm telling of you (V-EYC1)
Personal anecdotes	Do you remember when I went to the park with you? (V-EYC2) Are you going to Rory's party? (PS-EYM1) I'm going to live somewhere else in another country (PS-EYM1)
World observations	If you count up to 60 two times that means two minutes is over (PS-EYM2) Your heart's on your left (V-EYM1) Sometimes when babies have to get out of their Mummy's tummy Mummies have to be in hospital too (BC-EYC3)
Discussion of the recording equipment and researcher	Look there's a camera down there (BC-EYM1) She's put it there so it's top secret and no one else can see there. She has recorded our voices (BC-EYM1)

IX. Number of attempts of a scenario in a single recording

Table 65 Number of attempts of a scenario in a single recording session

Baby clinic		**Vet's**		**Cafe**		**Pet shop**		**Shoe shop**	
Group	No.	Group	No.	Group	No.	Group	No.	Group	No.
EYM1	3	EYC1	1	EYC3	1	EYM1	4	EYC1	1
EYC3	2	EYC2	1	EYM1	4	EYM2	2	EYC2	3
EYM2	2	EYM1	3	EYC2	2	EYM3	5	EYC3	4

X. *Transcription of children's role-play*

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
1	Nicole	*Who's the doctor? Ryan, you're the doctor. You're the doctor, Ryan. I'm the nurse.*	Talking to Ryan. Nicole hands Ryan the stethoscope
2	Ryan	(unclear)	
3	Nicole (nurse)	**What's wrong with your baby? What's her name?**	Hands the stethoscope to Ryan and adjusts her headwear with cross on it.
4	Phillip (parent)	**She's um, she's very sick**	
5	Nicole (nurse)	**What's wrong with her?**	
6	Phillip (parent)	**I think, she's just, come out of my tummy and she's very sick because she's eaten loads and loads of food in my tummy**	Nicole take the baby from Ryan
7	Ryan	*What's a cross?*	Ryan asks what the cross means on Nicole head wear.
8	Nicole	*A plus is a nurse, alright? Ryan? Ryan? Ryan? You need to doctor costume. You need a doctor costume. You need a doctor costume.*	Referring to the fact that Ryan is looking to wear the nurse's head scarf. Nicole hands over the headscarf to Ryan Nicole picks up the doctor costume
9	Ryan	Where's she gone?	Talking about researcher

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
10	Nicole (nurse)	She's gone. She was supposed to go. Because this is called the baby monitor. I got one so that Mummy knows that my baby sister (unclear) **Doctor, doctor, doctor** **Okay she's eaten a load of food, that means you have to cut her tummy doctor** **I'll just take out all the food. Where's my knife? Doctor, where's my knife? Doctor where's my knife?**	The children are looking for the knife and holding the baby
11	Ryan	**You can use the scissors**	
12	Nicole	**Doctor, I just cut. Doctor, I have to wear this. She ates loads of food. Just scrape it. We need a baby measure.**	Talking about the stethoscope. Nicole is putting the stethoscope to her ears. The children are examining the baby
13	Ryan	**I need to, we need to check how old she is, we need to check how old she is first**	
14	Nicole	**She's 15. Doctor. Okay You have to go home, we'll take care of her.**	Leads Phillip out of the baby clinic area
15	Ryan	**The baby is fourteen long**	Measuring the baby
16	Nicole	Hello Miss Jones	Teacher walking through area
17	Ryan	**The baby is fourteen long**	
18	Nicole	**Forty**	

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
19	Ryan	**Fourteen**	
20	Nicole	**How long? Okay. What's the baby's name?**	Nicole is at the 'writing station' and is writing down the information
21	Phillip	**Anya**	
22	Nicole	**Huh?**	
23	Phillip	**Anya**	
24	Nicole	**A n y a**	'sounds out' Anya
25	Ryan	**What's her surname?**	
26	Nicole	**What's her surname?**	
27	Ryan	**Smith**	
28	Nicole	**Huh?**	
29	Ryan	**Smith**	
30	Nicole	**Again, what's your name?**	
31	Phillip	**Phillip**	
32	Nicole	**Phillip** **P H I L L I P**	Spells out Phillip
33	Phillip	You've writ the P the wrong way round	Phillip points to the paper
34	Nicole	Okay. **There you go. Book an appointment if you want to come again.** *Pretend you forgot it.*	She corrects the letter and hands the paper to Phillip
35	Ryan	**The baby's feeling better**.	

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
		Can you come again? Where's the stethoscope	
36	Nicole	*Uh, here you go. Pretend you come again. Pretend you come again.*	
37	Nicole	**Sorry it's closed now. It's closed.**	Nicole types on the computer and the closes the curtains. Perhaps a signal for the end of that narrative?
38	Ryan	**Another baby's sick**	
39	Nicole	**What's the name? Hello. Another baby's sick**	
40	Ryan	*Where's the stethoscope. Where's that stethoscope?*	
41	Nicole	*What stethoscope?*	
42	Ryan	*What you use for the heart*	
43	Nicole	*That one, that stethoscope?*	
44	Ryan	*The one what is metal. The metal one. It's all metal.*	The children are looking for the stethoscope
45	Nicole	*This one?*	Nicole points to the scales
46	Ryan	*This one, ah this one!*	Ryan puts on the stethoscope and holds it to the baby's chest
47	Nicole	**Okay, this is her measure. 50 measure. Okay. Is her tummy alright? Yeah, pretend her tummy is**	Nicole is using a tape measure.
48	Ryan	**Her tooth is wobbly.**	

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
49	Nicole	**Her teeth is wobbly and then tummy wobbly and what else? Oh yeah 4 50 measures**	Nicole is writing
50	Ryan	**Oh we need the monitor, the monitor.**	The children are looking for the 'monitor' (meaning thermometer)
51	Nicole	**It's there. The monitor is there. See?**	Nicole picks something up (can't see from the video
52	Ryan	*No, that isn't a monitor. That's something. This is the monitor* **It's up to 25.**	Ryan puts the thermometer into the baby's mouth
53	Nicole	*Where's my thing? Thank you. This is my thing. I'm the nurse. It's stuck there*	Nicole and Phillip are sorting out what goes in the doctors' kits.
54	Ryan	*You need a bandage*	
55	Nicole	*This is my nurse thing*	Taking about the doctor's kit she is putting together
56	Ryan	*Take your nurse things.* **She needs the bandage**	Puts the bandage on the baby
57	Phillip	*I don't have anything*	Talking about having anything in his doctor's case
58	Nicole	*That's for Phillip Phillip. Phillip, Phillip* **Hello, what's wrong with your baby?**	Nicole hands over two pieces of equipment She then gives him a stethoscope
59	Ryan	*I need that suitcase.*	Ryan tries to take the case from Nicole
60	Nicole	**Doctor, Doctor?**	
6162	Ryan	*I'm the doctor*	

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
63	Nicole	*This is the nurse. That's the doctor.*	Pointing to Phillip
64	Ryan	*I'm doctor*	Tries to get the doctors kit from Nicole
65	Nicole	*Everybody is the doctor.*	
66	Ryan	*I'm doctor*	
67	Nicole	*This is a nurse. Wait, wait, Ryan, Ryan*	
68	Ryan	**Oh, the bandage is the wrong way round**	
69	Nicole	*The doctor's the main person.* **Hello, what's wrong? She has a tummy ache. Alright.**	Ryan sits down at the writing station.
70	Ryan	**How do you spell her name?**	
71	Nicole	**What? Sarah**	Links to the teacher introductions
72	Ryan	**Did it**	Types on the computer
73	Phillip	*I haven't got one of these*	Phillip takes the measuring tape from Nicole
74	Nicole	*It's a measuring tape. You take it.* Bye	The other class walk through the role-play area and the children call out bye to them.
75	Phillip	They are going to Forest Schools	Forest Schools is part of the curriculum
76	Phillip	*Oh this one's broken.*	Phillip takes a different measuring tape.
77	Ryan	**What's your door number? What's your door number?**	
78	Phillip	**34**	

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
79	Nicole	**She has her tummy rumbling. Put that back inside**	She has just listened to the baby with the stethoscope. Nicole puts the stethoscope back in the doctor's case
80	Ryan	**I did it**	Ryan is typing
81	Nicole	**Okay. What's her surname?** We're having raisins for snack	Nicole sees the raisons on the trolley.
82	Ryan	What?	
83	Nicole	We're having raisins for snack	
84	Ryan	Are we?	
85	Nicole	Yeah!	
86	Ryan	Don't tell anybody	
87	Nicole	Alright.	
88	Phillip	I love raisons. I don't like oranges but I love raisons	
89	Ryan	We're having raisons for our snack. Look there.	Points to the trolley where the raisons are
90	Nicole	Don't tell anybody. It's top secret isn't it?	
91	Phillip	Top secret raisons. Yes, top secret.	
92	Ryan	Do you know when I woke up I was sick but now I'm not.	Refers to experience outside school

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
93	Nicole	**Okay, I need to measure her. A measuring tape. Doctor, doctor, 30 40 4 1 1, 4 1 1 measures. The baby's 4 1 1 measures. Doctor, doctor, doctor, doctor the baby's 41 1 measures**	
94	Ryan	**What's her baby's name?**	Ryan is typing on the computer
95	Nicole	**Sarah. Okay, doctor, I just need to. I know it hurts**	Nicole is talking to the baby
96	Ryan	**What's her weight?**	Phillip is writing
97	Nicole	**Her weight is 1. One weight**	
98	Ryan	**And what's her age?**	
99	Nicole	**Zero. Okay. I need to see in her ear**	
100	Ryan	**That's for you to come the next time**	Hands Nicole a paper
101	Nicole	*No that's for, that's for the system monitor*	
102	Ryan	*This is the monitor*	
103	Nicole	*That's for him*	
105	Ryan	*Cool. It goes all the way to... Let me check it.*	Looking at a thermometer
105	Nicole	**Okay, let's put them over there**	Throws the paper over onto the table
106	Ryan	**It's all the way to the top**	Looking at the measuring tape
107	Phillip	**I will check your baby**	
108	Nicole	**It's all the way to the bottom**	

Turn	Child (role)	Utterance	Notes
109	Ryan	**It's all the way to eight one zero eight** **That's plastic**	
110	Nicole	**Sorry she has to stay with us. Her temperature is running down**	
111	Ryan	**I'll type that in**	
112	Phillip	**Now shall I check your baby?**	
113	Nicole	This is our end	
114	Ryan	Look one under here. Look I've found one under here. Look I've found one under there. Look, top secret don't tell anyone that. There's one there. That's the top secret, look. She's put it there so it's top secret and no one else can see there. She has recorded our voices. Look a nut	Ryan is talking about the audio recorder which is positioned on the floor under the table.
115	Phillip	What are you doing?	
116	Nicole	A nut	
117	Ryan	I've found a nut everybody	

XI. Transcription of teacher introduction

Baby Clinic Teacher Introduction EYC

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
1	Teacher	Down here in the far end we do lots of different things, don't we? We have a little office where we can do lots of writing, drawing and cutting jobs. We have the boxes that we can chose from for our construction but a big part of our area is what we call our role-play area. Now can anybody remind me what role-play means? What does it mean Paige?	
2	Paige	We don't do naughty things in here	
3	Teacher	Not quite, that was not quite what I was thinking of. Imogen?	
4	Imogen	So you can't do in there	
5	Teacher	Not exactly, .Daniel?	
6	Daniel	(Unclear)	
7	Teacher	It is a play area. It is a sort of play area where depending on what's inside it, you can think about how you are going to play there. So our role-play area today is an area, where you can go, Ruby look this way, and you can pretend to be somebody else. So you can pretend to be somebody who is working inside here, and for today and for the next few days our role-play area is set up to be a Baby Clinic. Have a little think. What's a Baby Clinic? Does anyone know? It's a bit tricky that one. Dylan do you know?	
8	Dylan	Where babies get better	
9	Teacher	Kind of. You're sort of right. Dylan said "where babies get better" That's a good idea, hold onto that one. Isla-Rose?	
10	Isla Rose	Is it where babies go to sleep?	
11	Teacher	No I don't think they go to sleep very much there. Not especially. Meggie?	
12	Meggie	They go to the doctors	

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
13	Teacher	They might go to the doctors, the babies might go to the doctors. Thomas?	
14	Thomas	Where they get born	
15	Teacher	Not usually, they are not normally born there. They are normally born in a hospital aren't they? Not normally at the clinic. Thomas?	
16	Thomas	It's where they get, um, it's where they get, go to the doctors.	
17	Teacher	It is kind of like going to the doctors. Imogen, last one.	
18	Imogen	The babies are in the mummy's tummy	
19	Teacher	No that's not a baby clinic. It isn't to check on the babies in the mummy's tummy. Not normally. The baby clinic is for when the babies have been born and you will see there are lots of babies. There is a baby in a buggy here and we've got some babies inside the clinic. A clinic is a bit like the doctors but it might not be the doctor, it might be a nurse who's in there. It doesn't mean to say that the baby is sick. It doesn't have to be a poorly baby. It might be but it doesn't have to be. A Baby Clinic, just one second Meggie and you can tell me, a Baby Clinic is where grown-ups take the babies for them to be checked. To check that they are growing properly to check that they are getting bigger, that they are putting on weight, they're eating properly, that they're sleeping properly and sometimes the mummies just need someone to say "that's fine" and Mummy might be a little bit worried about her baby and she can take it to the clinic and the doctor or the nurse will have a look and they will say "that baby's just fine" or they might say I think you need to give her some medicine or I think you need to give her something different to eat. What sort of things do you think that the doctor or the nurse will	

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
		be checking on the babies? What do you think they will check? Meggie	
20	Meggie	For their tummies	
21	Teacher	They might look at their tummies, that's right Paige?	
22	Paige	For their legs	
23	Teacher	They might check their legs to make sure that they are straight, that's right. Rohan?	
24	Rohan	Arms?	
25	Teacher	Arms, they might look at their arms. Mahathi?	
26	Mahathi	Hands	
227	Teacher	They might look at their hands to see if they are growing properly. Oliver?	
28	Oliver	Toes	
29	Teacher	They might look at their toes. In fact do you think that they might look at all of the baby?	
30	Children	No, yes	
31	Teacher	I think that they might. What did you want to say Imogen?	
32	Imogen	They might look at their tummies	
33	Teacher	They might look at their tummies. Rohan?	
34	Rohan	On their fingers	
35	Teacher	Fingers. Okay put your hands down for a moment. A baby clinic is a little bit different to the doctors because you don't have to ring up and make an appointment. If I've got a poorly baby then I would ring up the doctor's surgery and say "please can I have an appointment. My baby's really sick". But a Baby Clinic you can just take you baby and ask the nurse to have a look at them and one of the things that the nurse will do is, she will weigh the baby to see how heavy it is. So you can see in here we have some weighing scales. Here are the weighing scales to weigh the baby. Let's take these off. Here are the weighing scales so that they can weigh the baby to make sure that the baby is eating properly and is getting bigger and getting heavier.	The teacher removes two dolls from the weighing scales The teacher takes out the scales from the role play area to show the children A stethoscope

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
		The nurse or the doctor might use this. Does anyone know what this is called? It's a really tricky word, this one. Who's not talked to me yet? Namrita?	
36	Namrita	Unclear	
37	Teacher	Does anyone know what this is called I would be very pleased if somebody knows what this is called. Ellen	
38	Ellen	It's um to check your body	
39	Teacher	It is to check. It's got a special name. Daniel do you know?	
40	Daniel	It's a doctor thing where, um, it sees if it, if your heart	
41	Teacher	I think you've nearly got it Jake. I can hear Jake mumbling down here. Just let me, let Jake have a go Imogen. Do you think you know what it's called Jake?	
42	Jake	(An approximation of the word stethoscope)	
43	Teacher	Nearly, you're nearly right, this is called a stethoscope. A stethoscope, can you say that?	
44	All children	Stethoscope	
45	Teacher	And the nurse and the doctor would put this on her on her ears and would use this to listen usually to the baby's chest. If your baby had a cough, the doctor would be listening to what was wrong. He or she might be listening to the baby's heartbeat bobom bobum. So the doctor might use a stethoscope or the nurse or they might weigh the baby, they might also use this. Do you know what this is for? What do you think? Harry?	It is a measuring tape
46	Harry	(Unclear)	
47	Teacher	This isn't a stethoscope is it? This is not the same thing is it? Alfie?	
48	Alfie	A waister	I think he is referring to the fact you might use the measuring tape to measure a waist

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
49	Teacher	I know what you mean but it's not quite that. Alex do you know?	
50	Alex	Uhh it's a number line	
51	Teacher	It is a number line, it's a very good idea. It is a number line. It has got a special name it is called a measure, it's called a tape measure, because it's a piece of tape that has got lots of numbers on it to measure and the nurse or the doctor would measure the baby, they would measure how long the baby is, starting at this end holding the tape very still and measure to see how the baby was, how long it was and then they would look in their books and in their records and they would say "ahh yes this baby's grown so much since last time she came" and that's a very important job for the clinic to check that the babies are healthy, that they're growing. Another job that the clinic does, that the people at the clinic do is maybe to give the baby an injection. Who knows what an injection is? What is an injection? Umm let me see who's not talked to me today. Namrita what's an injection?	
52	Namrita	It's something that (unclear)	
53	Teacher	It's something?	
54	Teacher	No I didn't ask Daniel did I? We're not calling out. Paige do you know what an injection is?	
55	Paige	An injection is that you take the baby's temperature	
56	Teacher	Not quite, that's a different thing to take a baby's temperature but you're quite right the doctor or the nurse might take the baby's temperature because, just one second hands down, why do we take a temperature? Why does the doctor need to know about the baby's temperature? Ellen?	
57	Ellen	Because they check if you're hot	
58	Teacher	And if you're too hot, what might that mean?	
59	?	A fever	

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
60	Teacher	You might be sick, you might have a fever	
61		Introduction interrupted by teacher and parents needing to get through the role-play area.	
62	Teacher	Okay, so the doctor might take your temperature and usually they might put something called a thermometer in your mouth but quite often they put it under your arm to see if you're hot because if you're very hot it might mean that you're sick, that you're poorly. Let's got back to the injection a moment, who can tell me, last thing, about an injection? Isla Rose?	
63	Isla Rose	It can check your heart	
64	Teacher	No an injection doesn't check your heart	
65	Jake	An injection, you put a needle in yourself and if, if your blood is, if the blood is not good, you might not feel very well.	
66	Teacher	I think you are kind of right there Jake. Let's just sort this one out for a moment, put your hands down a moment. If you have an injection you are quite right you need a needle in a syringe	
67	?	I saw my Mummy do that	
68		Did Mummy have to have one? Wait a minute let me see if I can find one in the doctors set here. Part of it is missing but it looks kind of like this and inside it would be some liquid and there would be a needle on the end and the doctor might get the baby and say "the baby needs an injection" so he would find the baby's arm or leg and press the plunger in to give the baby an injection and that's usually so that the baby doesn't get sick when it's older. When you're a baby you have injections to try and make sure you're healthy so that you won't get sick when you are older. It's not because the baby's sick now it's to make her feel better when she's older. That's an	The teacher is looking for a syringe in the doctors kit

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
		injection. Jack what you are talking about is, if you're poorly the doctor can again get a needle only this time instead of putting some liquid in they can pull some of your blood out and so this little tube would be full up of red blood and then they can test it they can find out what's wrong with you. That's what you meant wasn't it? It's not quite the same as an injection, that's taking a blood sample. Wow, aren't they busy at the baby clinic? And I think when you have weighed the baby and measured the baby they have to write it all down to keep it safe so that the next time they come they can check to make sure the baby's growing and is healthy. Meggie, what did you want to say? Is it very important?	
69	Meggie	My baby had a needle because he was very poorly	
70	Teacher	Well you can have an injection when you're poorly and you can have an injection to stop you being poorly. Imogen	
71	Imogen	When I had it some people cried	
72	Teacher	Well sometimes it does hurt a little bit doesn't it? Right, put your hands down. So let's think, what could you be in the baby clinic? You could be the Mummy or the Daddy who's taking the baby to the clinic. You could be the nurse at the clinic, excuse me, who weighs and measures the baby. You might be the doctor who listens to the baby's chest or maybe gives an injection, you might be what we call the receptionist, the person who writes down all the measurements and the baby's name and how old they are and keeps that safe for the next time that the baby comes and they might give it to the Mummy as well so she knows she's been to the clinic. Alfie?	
73	Alfie		

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
74	Teacher	Have you forgotten? Can you tell me in a moment? Ellen?	
75	Ellen	Sometimes, in your blood, there are some bones in your blood	
75		Not quite no, the blood runs around your bones. There aren't bones inside your blood. We talked about this the other day didn't we? About your heart pumping your blood, it pumps your blood all the way around your body and it does help your bones to keep healthy but the bones are not inside your blood. Tiny tiny little tubes where your blood flows there wouldn't be enough room for bones in there would there? Does anybody want to say anything else about the baby clinic? Anything sensible? Rohan?	
76	Rohan	I had it yesterday	
77	Teacher	Had what darling?	
78	Rohan	(unclear)	
79	Teacher	You had an injection, did you? Okay, Paige?	
80	Paige	I had a jection on my two hands	
81	Teacher	An injection. Sometimes, and this is the funny bit, if you have an injection, you might have it in your arm, you might have it in your leg, but quite often you have it in your bottom. And one of the reasons for that is your arms and your legs are quite bony but your bottom has quite a lot of flesh so that it doesn't hurt so much. Do you think, shh, Isla Rose pop your hand down a moment please? Can we have everyone looking this way, shh, can we have you looking this way please. I will be very interested to see the people who are managing to be the Mummy or the Daddy or the Doctor, the Nurse, the Receptionist. And when you have written down all the things about the baby on the record sheets, like these, you can show them to me, make sure your name is on it, make sure the baby's	The in is stressed – injection The children laugh

Turn	Speaker	Utterance	Notes
		name is on it, make sure you've put down how much it weighs, how old it is and maybe how long the baby is too, you can measure with the tape measure, if it needs an injection could you write it on there too? If you need to take some blood I need to know that too I need to see that everything is working really well at the baby clinic and that all the babies are very healthy.	
82		End	

XII. Register Analysis

Register analysis of stage initiation for Clinician Consultation

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
Greeting		Salutation Tenor Role of language - constitutive	Hello
Introductions	F	People as participants Relational processes	We've got two babies even. (BC-EYM3)
	T	Statements realised as declaratives	Oh you've got two babies (BC-EYM3)
	M	Role of language - constitutive	
Personal details	F	Relational processes Material processes denoting the action of the stage	What's her name?' (BC-EYM1) I've got to write down the names (BC-EYM3)
	T	Questions realised as interrogatives requesting information. Statements realised as declaratives	
	M	Role of language – ancillary Channel: face to face	
Stating/ eliciting problem	F	People and pets as participants Relational processes Mental processes construing health problems	What's the matter? (BC EYC3) My snake's not feeling well' (V EYM1)

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
	T	Questions realised as interrogatives requesting information Statements realised by declaratives by the parent/ pet owner giving information	I don't know how to hold a baby (BC EYM3)
	M	Role of language: mainly constitutive Channel: face to face	
Diagnosing facts	F	People as participants realised as pronouns Body parts as technical lexemes Material processes construing the action of the stage. Identifying and attributive relational processes confirming the facts	I need to measure her (BC EYM1) I need to check his heart (V EYC2) The baby is 14 long (BC-EYCM1) Let me see in her throat Now shall I check your baby (BC-EYM1)
	T	Statements realised as declaratives Interrogatives Commands as imperatives with 'let me' Modulation – need to, have to	
	M	Role of language: Mainly ancillary Channel: face to face, some written	

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
Stating resolution/ exposition	F	The baby or pet as participants realised as pronouns Body parts as technical lexemes Processes are relational, mental	She has her tummy rumbling (BC-EYM1) His ear's sore (V-EYM1)
	T	Statements realised as declaratives	
	M	Role of language: mainly ancillary Channel: face to face	
Treatment	F	The use of field appropriate medical terms Processes are relational	Here you go the bandage (BC EYC3) This is an injection (BC-EYM3)
	T	Offers of goods and services realised as declaratives	
	M	Role of Language: Mainly ancillary Channel: face to face	
Clarifying residual matters	F	People as participants realised as pronouns	How many sleeps does she have to stay? (EYC3)
	T	Statements realised as declaratives Questions realised as interrogatives	That's for you to come the next time (EYM1) Does she need medicine? (BC-EYM3)
	M	Role of language: ancillary and constitutive Channel: face to face	

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
Conclusion	F	People as participants realised as pronouns	You have to go home, we'll take care of her' (BC EYM1)
	T	Commands realised as imperatives and declaratives	Book an appointment if you want to come again (BC EYM1)
	M	Role of language: mainly constitutive Channel: face to face	

Register analysis of stages for Service Encounter

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
Service Greeting		Salutations Use of titles	Hello Sir (HC-EYM1) Hello again (PS-EYM3)
Attendance allocation	F	People as participants realised as pronouns	I've come to eat this (HC-EYC2) Would you like a menu sir? (HC-EYM1) Who's next? (SS-EYC3)
	T	The use of titles Questions realised as interrogatives	
	M	Role of language: mainly constitutive Channel: face to face	
Service Bid	F	Mental processes construe the needs of the customer	What would you like to eat? (HC-EYM1) What about these sparkly shoes? (SS-EYC2) What do you want customer? (SS-EYC3)
	T	Questions realised as interrogatives Offers realised as interrogatives Modalised interrogatives	
	M	Role of language: mainly ancillary Channel: face to face, some written texts	
Service	F	People as participants realised as pronouns	May I buy a rabbit? (PS-EM1) I need some dog food (PS-EYM2)

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
		The processes are material, mental Field appropriate lexemes – pets, pet equipment, shoe types, food	I'm going to buy a different lead (PS-EYM3) Can you bake some chicken for my baby? (HC-EYC3) I want trainers please. I want to buy some more shoes (SS-EYC2)
	T	Commands realised as interrogatives and declaratives	
	M	Role of language: mainly constitutive	
Goods handover	F	Offers realised as declaratives	There's two sandwiches (HC-EYC2) Here's the coffee and here's the milk for the baby (HC-EYM1) Can I have my dog now? Thank you (PS-EYM2) You take those, here you go (SS-EYC3)
	T	Offers realised as declaratives	
	M	Role of language: ancillary Channel: face to face	
Pay	F	The use of a price in pounds or pennies. Commands realised as declaratives with modal verbs 'have to'	Is it 2p? (PS-EYM1) They are £1 dear (SS-EYC2) Give me some money (PS-EYM3)
	T	Range of mood structures and speech function	

In-role stage	FTM	Linguistic features	Sample realisations
	M	Role of language: at points ancillary and other points constitutive Channel: face to face	
Closing	F	The shop (or it) as the participant People as participants realised as pronouns	The shop's closed (HC-EYM1) No, it's closed (PS-EYM3) I'm finished (HC-EYM1)
	T	Statements realised as declaratives	
	M	Role of language: constitutive Channel: face to face	
Goodbye		Salutations	Bye

XIII. Presentation of quantitative findings relating to RQ1

Three different levels of analysis resulting in quantitative findings were conducted. I summarise these here in order to clarify the reasons for the differences in the approach and in the presentation of the figures.

At the level of the context (whether the utterance was in-role, regulative or coded as one of the 'other' utterances), a clause level analysis was carried out for processes, role of language and if ancillary what material action was ongoing. Figures presented at the level of context are counts and percentages drawn from coding made of the complete corpus (the 15 individual role-plays, of which each group played a scenario once). These figures are therefore presented at the level of context, for example:

Process Type	**In-role context**	**Regulative context**
Material	33% (642)	34% (270)

An analysis of Speech Function and Mood of the utterances was carried out for the complete corpus and this analysis also provides counts and percentages

Mood	**Declarative**	**Interrogative**	**Imperative**	**Minor clause**	**Total**
In-role context	58.5% (955)	19% (312)	9% (151)	13.5% (218)	1636
Regulative context	64% (420)	15% (98)	13% (85)	8% (51)	654

Figures presented at the level of the individual stage, are the findings from the analysis of the stage initiations that is the first utterance of the stage, and not the complete stage. These findings are presented as counts only due to the smaller numbers involved, for example:

Stage	Speech Function			
	Statement	Question	Offer	Command
Greeting	0	0	0	0
Attendance allocation	0	3	0	0
Service bid	3	25	9	4
Service	20	2	2	51
Total	23	30	11	55

XIV. Quantitative findings for Chapter 6

Table 66 Process types

Process Type	In-role context	Regulative context
Material	33% (642)	34% (270)
Relational	37% (718)	45% (361)
Mental	11% (205)	10% (82)
Verbal	1% (13)	2% (16)
Behavioural	1% (17)	-% (1)
Existential	1% (14)	1% (5)
No process	16% (308)	8% (68)
Totals	1,917	803

Table 67 Speech function in the language contexts

Speech Function	Statement	Question	Command	Offer	Total
In-role context	61% (1,004)	14% (222)	18% (296)	7% (114)	1,636
Regulative context	62% (402)	17% (113)	20% (133)	1% (6)	654

Table 68 Mood in the language contexts

Mood	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	Minor clause	Total
In-role context	58.5% (955)	19% (312)	9% (151)	13.5% (218)	1,636
Regulative context	64% (420)	15% (98)	13% (85)	8% (51)	654

Table 69 Speech function and mood stage initiation analysis in the Clinician Consultation

Stage	**Speech Function**				**Mood**				**Total**
	Statement	Question	Offer	Command	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	No Mood	
Greeting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Introductions	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Personal details	3	11	0	0	4	10	0	0	15
Stating/ eliciting problem	9	5	0	0	10	4	0	0	14
Diagnosing facts	15	2	5	3	16	4	6	0	26
Resolution/ exposition	16	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	16
Treatment	10	0	2	0	12	0	0	0	12
Clarifying residual matters	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	0	3
Conclusion	1	0	0	3	3		1	0	4

Table 70 Speech function and mood stage initiation analysis in the Service Encounter

Stage	**Speech Function**				**Mood**				**Total**
	Statement	Question	Offer	Command	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	No Mood	
Greeting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	17
Attendance allocation	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Service bid	3	25	9	4	2	35	3	1	41
Service	20	2	2	51	35	30	3	7	
Resolution	4	0	0	2	4	0	0	2	6
Handover	6	0	7	2	9	1	1	4	15
Pay	8	4	3	8	15	5	1	2	23
Closing	9	1	0	1	9	1	0	1	11
Goodbye									

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Table 71 Commands realised by mood in the baby clinic

Mood	**Doctor/ nurse**	**Child in the regulative stages, baby clinic**	**Child in regulative stages across the corpus**
Declarative	35% (16)	47% (14)	31% (42)
Interrogative	15% (7)	6% (2)	7% (9)
Imperative	43% (20)	47% (14)	61% (81)
Minor clause	7% (3)	0% (0)	1% (1)
Totals	46	30	133

Table 72 Commands by scenario and by role

Role-play scenario	**Roles**			**Totals**
Baby Clinic	Doctor and/ or Nurse 100% (46)	Parent 0% (0)	Other n/a	46
Vet's	Vet 31% (7)	Pet owner 46% (11)	Other 25% (6)	24
Cafe	Waiting staff 55% (57)	Customer 45% (48)	Other n/a	105
Shoe shop	Shop assistant 67% (49)	Customer 30% (21)	Other 3% (2)	72
Pet shop	Shop assistant 31% (15)	Customer 58% (28)	Other 11% (6)	49

Table 73 Modality by scenario and by role

Genre sub-type	Scenario	% of clauses that include modality N = 258	% of clauses that include modality by role
Clinician Consultation	Baby Clinic	24% (61)	Doctor/ Nurse 93% (57)
			Parent 4% (4)
	Vet's	12% (32)	Vet 69% (22)
			Pet owner 6% (2)
			Other 25% (8)
Service Encounter	Cafe	23% (59)	Cafe staff 64% (38)
			Customer 56% (21)
	Pet Shop	28% (72)	Shop staff 28% (20)
			Customer 64% (46)
			Other role 8% (6)
	Shoe shop	13% (34)	Shop staff 59% (20)
			Customer 35% (12)
			Other role 6% (2)
Total		162	

Table 74 Modalisation by scenario and by role

Genre sub-type	Scenario	% of clauses that include modalisation N = 171	% of clauses that include modalisation by role
Clinician Consultation	Baby Clinic	22% (38)	Doctor/ Nurse 89% (34)
			Parent 11% (4)
	Vet's	16% (28)	Vet 75% (21)
			Pet owner 7% (2)
			Other 18% (5)
Service Encounter	Café	16% (27)	Waiting staff 70% (19)
			Customer 30% (8)
	Pet Shop	35% (60)	Shop staff 37% (22)
			Customer 55% (33)
			Other role 8% (5)
	Shoe shop	11% (18)	Shop staff 72% (13)
			Customer 17% (3)
			Other role 11% (2)

Table 75 Modulation by role

Genre sub-type	Scenario	% of clauses that include modulation N=95	% of clauses that include modulation by role
Clinician Consultation	Baby Clinic	24% (23)	Doctor/ Nurse 100% (23)
			Parent 0% (0)
	Vet's	4% (4)	Vet 25% (1)
			Pet owner % (0)
			Other 75% (3)
Service Encounter	Cafe	36% (34)	Waiting staff 59% (20)
			Customer 41% (14)
	Pet Shop	20% (19)	Shop staff 11% (2)
			Customer 84% (16)
			Other role 5% (1)
	Shoe shop	16% (15)	Shop staff 40% (6)
			Customer 60% (9)
			Other role 0% (0)

Table 76 Utterances by genre sub-type and role type

Genre sub-type	Roles		
Clinician Consultation N=564	Clinician (doctor, nurse or vet) 77.5% (437)	Parent or pet owner 15% (86)	Other 7.5% (41)
Service Encounter N=1,072	Waiting staff or shop assistant 60% (640)	Customer 33% (360)	Other 7% (72)

Table 77 Questions by role

Scenario	Role	Percentage (count)
Baby clinic (N=71)	Clinician	93% (66)
	Parent	7% (5)
Vets (N=22)	Vet	64% (14)
	Pet owner	14% (3)
	Other	23% (5)
Cafe (N=51)	Staff	82% (42)
	Customer	12% (9)
Pet shop (N=39)	Staff	21% (8)
	Customer	69% (27)
	Other	10% (4)
Shoe shop (N=39)	Staff	66% (26)
	Customer	18% (7)
	Other	15% (6)
Total		222

Table 78 Material Action present

	In-role	Regulative
Material action present	77% (1,477)	57% (455)
Material action absent	23% (449)	43% (344)
Total	1,926	799

Table 79 Semiotic resources in-role

Semiotic resources in-role	Percentage of clauses (No. of clauses)
Use of role-play equipment	82% (1,217)
Writing equipment	12% (175)
Use of telephone	4% (62)
Use of the tannoy	2% (23)
Total	77% (1,477)

Table 80 Changes of channel in the role-play scenarios

	Clauses coded with channel other than face to face				
	Baby clinic	Vets	Cafe	Pet shop	Shoe shop
Writing activity					
On paper	69	10	21	53	2
At computer	13	0	0	0	0
Texting	0	0	4	0	0
Telephone	38	9	5	13	n/a
Tannoy	n/a	0	0	0	17
Total	120	19	30	66	19